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GOETHE.

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GOETHE

his Life and Writings

BY

OSCAR BROWNING, M.A.

Fellow of King's College, Cambridge



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To

F. W. CORNISH,

of Eton College,

IN MEMORY OF

A LIFE-LONG FRIENDSHIP.

PREFACE.

THIS account of Goethe's life and writings is reprinted, with alterations and additions, from an article contributed to the last edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." It is possible that the discoveries of the last ten years may not have been completely represented in this revision ; but it is difficult to alter much in what has been carefully conceived and planned without injuriously affecting the harmony and balance of the whole, and the desirability of preserving this has been constantly before the writer's mind.

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"ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA," with additions by the Author.]

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GOETHE.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE Birth and Education.
(1749-1832) was born in Frankfort on August 28, 1749. His parents were citizens of that Imperial town, and Wolfgang was their only son and their eldest child. His father was born on July 31, 1710, and in 1742 received the title of Imperial Councillor. He married on August 20, 1748, at the age of thirty-eight, Catherine Elizabeth Textor, a girl of seventeen. Her family was better than his own, and held a higher position in the town. Her father was imperial councillor, and had been schultheiss, or chief magistrate. In Decem-

ber, 1750, was born a daughter, Cornelia, who remained until her death, at the age of twenty-seven, her brother's most intimate friend. She was married in 1773 to John George Schlosser. The house in which Goethe was born is still to be seen in the Hirschgraben. Goethe has described to us how it was rebuilt, and it has since been much altered. His education was irregular; he went to no school, and his father rather stimulated than instructed him. But the atmosphere by which he was surrounded gave him, perhaps, the best education he could have received. Frankfort, a free town of the Empire, still preserved the appearance of the Middle Ages. It had lost the reality of power, but its citizens naturally grew up with a strong sense of independence, and a power of realizing the unity of Germany which was wanting in a small State. The boy from his earliest youth was accustomed to the

companionship of his elders. His father was strict and formal, his mother quick and lively, inspired with no small share of the genius of her son. Goethe lived in the freest intercourse with every kind of society in the town, in which he might expect some day to be an important personage. There was no capital like London or Paris to call him away from the provinces; Berlin was poor and distant, Vienna half Italian and half Spanish. Goethe must have been brought up with the ambition to take his degree at the university as doctor, to return home and become an advocate, to make a rich marriage, to go through the regular course of civil offices, to inherit his father's house, and perhaps one day to be burgomaster. His home was a cultivated one. The father was fond of art and of the German poetry then in fashion. The influence of Lessing had scarcely made itself felt; Herder was

only five years older than Goethe himself. Gellert and Gottsched were the two oracles of poetry,—Gottsched a pedantic product of the earlier French culture, Gellert old-fashioned and immovable, and unable to comprehend the new spirit. The chief debt that Goethe owed to him was the improvement in his handwriting, on which Gellert laid great stress, and which he coupled with moral excellence. Goethe's father had a great respect for these rhyming poets, and he so strongly objected to the new German hexameters that Wolfgang could only read Klopstock's *Messiah* with his sister in the greatest secrecy and in terror of discovery. He did, however, read it, and learned much of it by heart. French culture gave at this time the prevailing tone to Europe. Goethe could not have escaped its influence, and he was destined to fall under it in a special manner. In the Seven Years' War, which was

then raging, France took the side of the Empire against Frederick the Great. Frankfort was full of French soldiers, and a certain Comte Thorane, who was quartered in Goethe's house, had an important influence on the boy. Still more strongly was he affected by the French company of actors, whom he came to know both on and off the stage. He learned to declaim in this manner passages of Racine without understanding a word of them. At a later period he knew French thoroughly well, and wrote both prose and poetry in that language. His first writings were imitations of the French manner; his earliest play was the imitation of a French after-piece. We can understand how these different forces were to work upon his future life. From his father he derived the steadfastness of character which enabled him to pursue an independent career of self-culture and devotion

to Art in the midst of every kind of distracting influence ; from his mother he inherited the joyous nature and lively sympathy, the flow of language and love of narration, without which he could not have been a poet. Before the age of sixteen he had seen every kind of life in a city particularly favourable to a richness of individual character ; he was entirely free from the prejudices of a small State ; and as far as he cared for Germany he cared for it as a whole. He was tinged at an early age with the influence of the clearest and most finished language in Europe ; and this influence, uniting with similar qualities in Goethe's mind, made his prose a new phenomenon in the literature of his country, unlike anything which had been seen before. Lastly, with the most passionate aspirations for freedom and independence of life, he was born into the slavery of a mechanical career of prosaic

prosperity, the pressure of which was not strong enough to confine him, but was strong enough to stimulate all his efforts to break the bonds.

Goethe, if we may believe his autobiography, experienced his first love about the age of fifteen in the person of Gretchen, whom some have supposed to be the daughter of an innkeeper at Offenbach. He worshipped her as Dante worshipped Beatrice. She treated him as a child, much as Miss Chaworth treated Byron. But there is no other evidence of this first love, and it would be quite in accordance with Goethe's manner to enlarge on a very small foundation, or to concentrate on one person the feelings which were devoted to several individuals. His letters speak of a boyish love for one Charitas Meixner, a friend of his sister, two years younger than himself, the daughter of a rich merchant at Worms.

First
love.

He expresses his affection for her with all the fervour of French phraseology, and the passion did not leave him when he had removed to Leipsic. But Charitas was able to console herself with another engagement. She married in February, 1773, a merchant of her native town, and died at the end of the following year.

Leipsic.

In the autumn of 1765 Goethe, who had just completed his sixteenth year, travelled to Leipsic in the company of a bookseller, Fleischer, and his wife, who were on their way to attend the fair. On the 19th of October he was admitted as a student of the Bavarian nation, one of the four into which the University was divided. For his lodging he had two neat little rooms in the Feuerkugel, the Fire Ball, looking into the long court-yard which leads from the old market to the new. When we remember that his three years at Leipsic,

about which so much has been written, correspond with the last three years of an English boy at a public school, we can form some idea of the singular individuality of his character and the maturity and ripeness of his genius. He was sent to Leipsic to study law, in order that he might return to Frankfort fitted for the regular course of municipal distinction. For this purpose he carried with him a letter to Professor Böhme, who taught history and public law in the University, but had no other distinction to recommend him. He told Professor Böhme that he intended to devote himself, not to law, but to *belles lettres*, or, to use the word which F. A. Wolf had invented, philology. Böhme did his best to dissuade him, and in this was assisted by his wife. The effect of their advice was rather to disgust Goethe with modern German literature, to make him despise what he had already written,

and to drive him into the distractions of society, which wasted both his time and his money. He did, however, attend some lectures. He heard the lectures of Ernesti on Cicero's *Orator*, but the professor dealt rather with questions of grammar than of taste. He attended Gellert's lectures on literature, and even joined his private class.

Gellert held a high position among German men of letters, which was due quite as much to his character as to his genius. He advised Goethe to desert poetry for prose, and to take to authorship only as an employment subordinate to the serious occupations of his life. Goethe tells us that in his lectures upon taste he never heard Gellert mention the names of Klopstock, Kleist, Wieland, Gessner, Gleim, or Lessing. He also attended the lectures of another literary professor, Clodius, a young man about ten years older than himself. Clodius

corrected Goethe's writings with red ink, and pointed out the faults without showing the way to mend them. Goethe had written a poem of congratulation for the marriage of his uncle Textor (February 17th, 1766), which, according to the fashion of the time, was full of gods and goddesses and other mythological apparatus. Clodius was unsparingly hard upon this production, and Goethe then perceived that his critic was just as faulty as himself in the use of abstractions and strange outlandish words to give weight and authority to his verse. He satirized Clodius by writing a poem in praise of the cakes of the confectioner Händel, and by a parody of his drama *Medon*. His position towards the professors of his University was not an enviable one. His real University education was derived from intercourse with his friends. First among these was J. G. Schlosser, who afterwards

married his sister. Goethe used to dine with him at a *table d'hôte* kept by a wine-dealer, Schönkopf, in the Bruhl (No. 79), in a house which still exists. Schlosser, who was at this time private secretary to the duke of Würtemberg and tutor to his children, was ten years older than Goethe. He had a great influence upon him, chiefly in introducing him to a wider circle of German, French, English, and Italian poetry. At the table of Professor Ludwig, where Goethe had previously dined, the conversation had generally turned on medical and scientific subjects. Another friend of Goethe's was Behrisch, tutor to the young Count Lindenau. He was a man in middle life, and he combined originality of character and clearness of literary judgment with a dry and caustic wit, and an ever-abiding sense of humour, much in the same proportions as were found in Merck, who exercised

at a later period an important influence over Goethe's career. His friendship with Goethe was not at first of advantage to him. He was deprived of his tutorship from a suspicion that he did not always keep the most select society, and his successor was forbidden to allow his charge to associate with the young poet. This is supposed to have been caused by Goethe's disrespectful behaviour to Professor Clodius. Gellert obtained for Behrisch an educational post at the court of Dessau, and Goethe kept up a constant correspondence with him till his death in 1809. Behrisch would not allow Goethe to print his poems, but copied them out instead in a beautiful hand. He probably had a considerable effect in producing the simplicity and naturalness of Goethe's early style.

But the person who had the strongest effect on Goethe's mental development was Adam Frederick Oeser, at this time

Oeser.

director of the Academy of Arts in Leipsic. Goethe took lessons from him in drawing, and, not content with this, tried his hand at etching. A little device of his for a book-plate or a bill-head is extant, in which a slab with the name C. G. Schönkopf is represented with three bottles above and a wreath of flowers below. Oeser had been a friend of Winckelmann's, and exercised great influence over his views of Art. This was a source of considerable reputation to him, and Winckelmann's tragic death, the news of which reached Leipsic whilst Goethe was there, must have brought the relation between them into stronger relief. Goethe always spoke of Oeser's influence with the greatest affection and respect. He writes—"Oeser's discoveries have given me a fresh opportunity of blessing myself that I had him for my instructor. He entered into our very souls, and we must indeed have

been without souls not to have derived benefit from him. His lessons will produce their effects through all the rest of my existence. He taught me that the ideal of beauty is simplicity and repose." We find Goethe at Weimar continually consulting Oeser for designs for furniture and for theatrical entertainments.

Goethe from his earliest years was never without a passion, and at Leipsic his passion was Kitty Schönkopf, the Aennchen of the autobiography, the daughter of the host at whose house he dined. She often teased him with her inconstant ways, and to this experience is due his first drama *Die Laune des Verliebten*, "Lovers' Quarrels," as it may be styled. It is a mere trifle, a pastoral in one act, written in alexandrines in the French style. Two happy and two unhappy lovers are contrasted. The only interest of the piece is, that it is a fragment from Goethe's own life.

Käthchen
Schön-
kopf.

A deeper chord is struck in *Die Mitschuldigen* (The Fellow-Sinners), which forms a dismal and forbidding picture both of the time and of the experiences of the youth who wrote it. The daughter of an innkeeper has made an unhappy marriage, and is visited by a former lover who is in good circumstances. An assignation is arranged, and the interview is witnessed by the husband, who has come to steal the stranger's purse. The father comes in to read one of the stranger's letters. He is surprised, and is with his daughter suspected of the theft. The real culprit is discovered, but defends himself by accusing the stranger of his conduct to his wife. So they are all guilty. This play was first written in one act. It was afterwards enlarged to three acts, and published in 1787. The manuscript, which still exists, was given to Frederike Brion of Sesenheim. Besides these plays Goethe wrote

at Leipsic twenty little songs of an erotic character, which were set to music by his young friend Breitkopf. He describes them as moral-sensuous, but they are more sensuous than moral. They have the merit of a musical easy flow of expression, various moods of passion, with a happy readiness and elegance. Only a few of them were included in his collected works, and those very much altered. They show the influence of Wieland; but by one side of Wieland Goethe was never affected. He was never led to mingle classical ideas and emblems with the unrestrained and sensual frivolity which was disseminated from France. He never imitated Agathon or Musarion. Whatever may have been the bitterness of his experience of life, or the waywardness of his excited fancy, he conceived a true idea of the real nature of classical Art. In this Winckelmann and Lessing were his

teachers, and he was never untrue to the lessons which they inculcated. This was the most valuable possession he brought back from Leipsic. He had an opportunity of establishing his principles of taste during a short visit to Dresden, in which he devoted himself to the pictures and the antiques. The end of Goethe's stay at Leipsic was saddened by illness. One morning at the beginning of the summer he was awakened by a violent hemorrhage. For several days he hung between life and death, and after that his recovery was slow, although he was tended with the greatest anxiety by his friends. He finally left Leipsic far from well on August 28, 1768, his nineteenth birthday.

Frankfort. Goethe made an enforced stay of a year and a half in his native town. It was perhaps the least happy part of his life. He was in bad health. His cure proceeded slowly, and he had several

relapses, and the weakness of the lungs, which was his first complaint, was succeeded by a weakness of the digestion, which was yet more troublesome and painful. The society of Frankfort seemed to him far less agreeable than that of Leipsic ; he contrasted the cold, stiff, formal, old-fashioned life of the Imperial city with the freshness, geniality, and intellectual activity of the Saxon university. His family relations were not pleasant. His grandfather Textor was struck with paralysis ; his father showed but little sympathy with his aspirations for universal culture, and could imagine no career for him but that of a successful jurist. His sister had grown somewhat harsh and cold during his absence, and was possessed by a morbid self-consciousness, which she committed to the confidential pages of a secret diary. The tone of this diary, partly the result of family temperament,

partly of the character of the age, throws an interesting light on the despair of Werther. Goethe's mother was always the same to him, a bright, genial, sympathetic friend. But her love could not ward off the pressure of circumstances, or supply a substitute for a wider and more unfettered life. Goethe, during his illness, received great attention from Fräulein von Klettenberg, a friend of his mother's, a pietist of the Moravian school. She initiated him into the mystical writings of those abstracted saints, and she engaged him in the study of alchemy, which served at once to prepare him for the conception of *Faust* and for the scientific researches of his later days. During his stay at Frankfurt he wrote very little. It may be that the two Leipsic dramas received here their completed form. A farce in memory of his Leipsic life, a poetical letter to Frederike Oeser, the daughter of his

teacher, a few songs, some of them religious, make up the tale of his productions, as far as we know them.

He arrived at Strasburg April 2, Strasburg. 1770. It was intended that after a sojourn in the University of that place he should visit Paris, the centre of refinement. Goethe stayed in Strasburg till August 28, 1771, his twenty-second birthday, and these sixteen months are perhaps the most important of his life. During them he came into active contact with most of those impulses of which his after life was a development. If we would understand his mental growth, we must ask who were his friends. He took his meals at the house of the Fräulein Lauth in the Krämergasse. The table was mainly filled with medical students. At the head of it sat Salzmann, a grave man of fifty years of age. His experience and his refined taste were very attractive to Goethe, who

made him his intimate friend. Goethe was soon drawn by the studies of his companions to desert his own. A notebook of this date is preserved, which gives us a full account of his studies and employments. He attended lectures on anatomy, on midwifery, and on chemistry. His own studies were chiefly devoted to the last science ; and he did not forget his favourite alchemy. He had brought with him to Strasburg introductions to pietistic circles, and this made him at first somewhat staid and retired in his pleasures, and disinclined for general society. This soon wore off, and the natural cheerfulness of his genial nature returned to him. Two songs, *Blinde Kuh* and *Stirbt der Fuchs so gilt der Balg*, refer to the social life of this period. He went on picnics, he wrote French poetry, he took dancing lessons, he learnt the violoncello. The table of the Fräulein Lauth received some new

guests. Among these was Jung-Stilling, the self-educated charcoal-burner, who in his memoir has left a graphic account of Goethe's striking appearance, his broad brow, his flashing eye, his mastery of the company, and his generosity of character. Another was Lerse, a frank open character who became Goethe's favourite, and whose name is immortalized in *Götz von Berlichingen*. Goethe did not desert his studies in Art. He learnt from the constant study of the cathedral of Strasburg the effect of Gothic architecture, and he shuddered when he saw the reception-rooms of the youthful Marie Antoinette hung with tapestries which represented the marriage of Jason and Medea, and seemed to forebode the coming doom. His diary also shows that he spent much time in philosophical speculation. But the most important event of his Strasburg sojourn was his acquaintance with

Herder. Herder was five years older than Goethe. He was then travelling as tutor to the young prince of Holstein-Eutin, but was obliged to spend the whole winter of 1770-71 in Strasburg on account of an affection of his eyes. Goethe was with him every day, often all day. Herder, who was a pupil of a more original genius, Hamann, taught him the true value of Nature in Art, and the principles of what we should now call the romantic school. He made *Ossian* known to him, and the wealth of popular poetry in all nations which the publication of *Ossian* revealed; he enchanted him with the idyllic simplicity of the *Vicar of Wakefield*; but, above all, he shook Goethe's sensibility to the roots by revealing to him the power of the mighty Shakespeare. He now saw how far superior Homer was to his Latin imitators, and how false were the canons of French Art. Goethe's spirit

was liberated from its trammels, and *Götz* and *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister* became possible to his mind. At a later period he forged for himself fetters of a different kind.

Goethe's stay at Strasburg is generally connected still more closely with another circumstance,—his passion for Frederike Brion of Sesenheim. The village lies about twenty miles from Strasburg, and Frederike's father was pastor there. Goethe was introduced by his friend Weyland, an Alsatian, as a poor theological student. Fresh from his study of Goldsmith, he found the *Vicar of Wakefield* realized. The father was a simple worthy man, the eldest of the three daughters was married, the two younger remained, — Maria Salome, whom Goethe calls Olivia, and Frederike, to whom the poet principally devoted himself. She was tall and slight, with fair hair and blue eyes, and just

Sesen-
heim.

sixteen years of age. Goethe gave himself up to the passion of the moment ; what he felt and suffered is known to us by his songs. At least ten songs are addressed to her, and several others were written for her. During the winter of 1770, in the intervals of his conversations with Herder, Goethe often rode over to Sesenheim. Neither storm, nor cold, nor darkness kept him back. He should have been busy with his dissertation for the degree of doctor. The subject he had chosen was the duty of providing an established Church. But the attractions of Frederike were a great interruption to his labours. In the spring Herder went away. The fine weather drew Goethe still more strongly to Sesenheim. Picnics, water parties, games, dances, and other amusements, illuminated by enthusiasm for literature, filled up the weeks. As his time for leaving Strasburg came nearer, he felt that this love was merely

a dream, and could have no serious termination. Frederike felt the same on her side. A visit of the mother and daughters to Strasburg in July made this appear more clearly. On August 6 Goethe took his degree as doctor of law. Shortly afterwards he bade adieu to Sesenheim, and the tears stood in Frederike's eyes as he reached out his hand from horseback. From Frankfort he wrote his final farewell ; and it was then, as he tells us, that he found from her answer for the first time how deeply she had loved him. The account of this love episode in the autobiography does Goethe injustice. There is nothing in the letters or the poems of the time to show that he had wantonly trifled with her affections. Eight years afterwards, on his way to Switzerland, he spent a night with the Brions at Sesenheim, and was received with the utmost kindness. He was shown the arbour where he had

sat, the songs he had written, the carriage he had painted. He left them in the morning with content. Frederike lived till 1813, well known for her works of charity. She never married; the heart that Goethe had loved, she said, should never love another.

Return to
Frankfort.

Goethe's return to Frankfort is marked by a number of songs, of which the "Wanderer's Sturmlied" is the most remarkable. He found his Frankfort existence more intolerable than before. He had outgrown many of the friends of his youth. Those with whom he felt most sympathy were the two Schlossers and his sister Cornelia. He found in her alone one who sympathized with all his aspirations. He cared nothing for his profession; he was more determined than ever to devote himself to letters, and not to law. He found in the neighbouring town of Darmstadt a literary circle which Frankfort did not supply. The land-

gravine Caroline set a good example; and had collected round her a number of kindred spirits, men and women. Among them were Wenck, and Petersen, and Caroline Flachsland, who was afterwards to marry Herder. But the soul of the literary circle was Merck, now thirty years of age, attached to the War Office. Goethe has represented him in the autobiography as a cold and unfeeling cynic, a spirit who always said No, a prototype of Mephistopheles. History represents him otherwise as a man of cultivated and chastened judgment, a represser of enthusiasm, a respecter of the rules of Art, anxious to hold the balance between the old school and the new. Goethe had dominated over all his other friends ; Merck dominated over him. He has left but little of his own writings. He was one of those who inspire genius in others, and whose truest picture lives in the recol-

lections of their friends. These months were full of literary activity. To them belong an oration on Shakespeare, delivered at Frankfort, an essay on Erwin von Steinbach, the builder of the Strasburg cathedral, two theological treatises of a neologistic character on the commandments of Moses and the miraculous tongues of Pentecost, and a number of reviews written for the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeiger*, which had been founded by Merck. But the work into which he threw all his genius was the dramatization of the history of the Imperial knight of the Middle Ages, Gottfried or Götz von Berlichingen. The immediate cause of this enterprise was his enthusiasm for Shakespeare. After reading him, he felt, he said, like a blind man who suddenly receives his sight. The unities of time and place vanished into nothing. The true form of Art was seen to be that which holds the wayward

Götz von
Berlich-
ingen.

impulses together by an invisible bond, just as, in the life of man, necessity is wedded to free will. The study of a dry and dull biography of Götz, published in 1731, supplied the subject for his awakened powers. From this miserable sketch he conceived within his mind a complete picture of Germany in the 16th century. The chief characters of his play are creatures of his imagination representing the principal types which made up the history of the time. Every personage is made to live; they speak in short sharp sentences like the powerful lines of a great master's drawing. The first sketch of *Götz* was finished in six weeks, in the autumn of 1771. Cornelia was consulted at every stage in the work. Herder saw it, and gave his approval. On his return from Wetzlar, in 1773, Goethe wrote the piece over again, and published it, with the help of Merck, in the

form in which we now possess it. It ran like wild-fire through the whole of Germany. It was the progenitor, not only of the "Sturm und Drang" period to which it gave the tone, but of the romantic knightly literature which teemed from the German press. At a later period, in 1804, Goethe prepared another edition for the stage, which took five hours in acting. This recension has not been represented since.

Wetzlar. With the manuscript of *Götz* in his pocket, Goethe left Frankfort in the spring of 1772 for Wetzlar, a quiet country town on the Lahn, one of the seats of government of the Holy Roman Empire. The emperors lived at Vienna; they were crowned at Frankfort; they held their parliaments at Ratisbon, and at Wetzlar their courts of justice. It was the custom for young lawyers to attend the sittings of these courts for a certain time before they could be ad-

mitted to practise on their own account. The company of these students, of the embassies from the component parts of the Empire, and of various Imperial officials, made the society a pleasant and lively one.

Goethe soon found friends. The secretary of the Brunswick legation, Goué, formed a round table of knights,—a *Ritter-tafel*. The members adopted names from the age of chivalry, and apportioned among themselves the neighbouring villages as commanderies and fiefs. Goethe took the name of Götz. Deeds of knightly prowess were performed in friendly rivalry, but they consisted chiefly of eating and drinking. This masquerade at least served to keep the idea of Götz constantly before Goethe's mind. But the place has sadder associations. It is impossible to dissociate the name of Wetzlar from that of Werther. The Deutsches Haus,

then the property of the knights of the Teutonic Order, exists still in the main street of Wetzlar. It was occupied by one of the officials of the Order, by name Buff, an honest man with a large family of children. The second daughter, Lotte Buff, Lotte, blue-eyed, fair, just twenty years of age, was first met by Goethe shortly after his arrival, at a ball at Wolperts-hausen. She strongly attracted him ; he became a constant visitor at the house. He found that Lotte was a second mother to her brothers and sisters, and he delighted to play games with them and tell them stories. Lotte was really though not formally engaged to Kestner, a man of two-and-thirty, secretary to the Hanoverian legation. The discovery of this relation made no difference to Goethe ; he remained the devoted friend of both. He visited Lotte and her children ; he walked with Kestner about the streets till midnight ; they kept their common birthday together in the Ger-

man house on the 28th of August ; Kestner felt no jealousy ; Goethe was content with Lotte's friendship ; her heart was large enough for both. But the position was too critical to last. On September 10th they met in the German house for the last time. Lotte spoke of the other world, and of the possibility of returning from it. It was arranged between them that whoever died first should appear to the others. This conversation confirmed Goethe's purpose ; he determined to go away. He made no adieu, but wrote a line to Kestner to say that he could not have borne to stay a moment longer. Merck had probably persuaded him to this step. To divert his mind he took him to Ehrenbreitstein and introduced him to Sophie la Roche, the friend of Wieland's youth, and to her daughter Maximiliane, with whom Goethe was charmed. The most interesting places in the neighbourhood of Coblentz were visited. Goethe

returned to Frankfort by the river in a yacht. Here he was possessed with the memory of Lotte. He fastened her silhouette over his bed. Kestner came to Frankfort in September; Goethe and Schlosser went together to Wetzlar in November. Here he heard of the death of Jerusalem, a young man attached to the Brunswick legation. Goethe had been with him at the University of Leipzig, but had seen little of him at Wetzlar. Of a moody temperament, disheartened by failure in his profession, and soured by a hopeless passion for the wife of another, Jerusalem had borrowed a pair of pistols from Kestner under pretence of a journey, and had shot himself on the night of October 29th.

Goethe obtained a full narrative of the circumstances from Kestner, and immediately afterwards began his *Werther*, in which the circumstances above related are interwoven. Goethe tells us that it

was written in four weeks, but this can hardly have been the case. We have notices of its slow progress during the whole of the summer of 1773. In 1774 it is far advanced enough to be shown to some intimate friends. It is not till the middle of September, 1774, that two copies of the book are sent in the greatest secrecy to Sophie la Roche and Lotte Buff. In October it spread over the whole of Germany. It was enthusiastically praised or sternly condemned. It was printed, imitated, translated into every language of Europe, criticized in every periodical, with the fullest meed of praise or scorn. It made the round of the world, and penetrated even to China. The *Werther* fever wrung the hearts of men and women with imaginary sorrows; floods of tears were shed; young men dressed in blue coats and yellow breeches shot themselves with *Werther* in their hands. It opened the floodgates of pent-

up sentimentalism which had been stirred by the philosophy of the time, and which the calamities of the next generation were sternly to suppress. It may be imagined that Kestner and Lotte were not well satisfied with the liberty which Goethe had taken with their personalities. They were married on April 4th, 1773, and Goethe provided the wedding ring. Notwithstanding the coolness which the publication of *Werther* produced between them, the correspondence between Goethe and Kestner continued to the end of the century. Lotte saw Goethe in Weimar in 1816, when she was sixty-three years old; she was still beautiful, but her head shook with palsy. She died in 1828. The second part of *Werther* represents the agony of a jealous husband. This was inspired by Brentano, an Italian merchant resident in Leipsic, a widower with five children, who had married Maximiliane, the daughter of

Sophie la Roche. Goethe loved her as an elder brother, but her husband scarcely approved of the intimacy. Merck tells us that Brentano's ideas went very little beyond his business, and that it was dispiriting for Goethe to have to look for his young girl friend among barrels of herrings and piles of cheeses. "Goethe," he says, "much consoles her for the smell of oil and cheese, and for her husband's manners."

Götz and *Werther* formed the solid foundation of Goethe's fame. They were read from one end of Germany to the other. It is difficult to imagine that the same man can have produced both works, so different are they in matter and in style. *Werther* represents the languid sentimentalism, the passionate despair, which possessed an age vexed by evils which nothing but the knife can cure, and tortured by the presence of a high ideal which revealed to it at once

the depth of its misery and the hopelessness of a better lot. *Götz* was the first manly appeal to the chivalry of German spirit, which, caught up by other voices, sounded throughout the fatherland like the call of a warder's trumpet, till it produced a national courage founded on the recollection of an illustrious past, which overthrew the might of the conqueror at the moment when he seemed about to dominate the world. *Werther* is the echo of Rousseau, the lamentation of a suffering humanity; *Götz* is the prototype of Stein, the corner stone of a renovated Empire. *Götz*, in its short, sharp dialogue, recalls the pregnant terseness of mediæval German, before it was spoilt by the imitators of Ciceronian Latinity. *Werther*, as soft and melodious as Plato, was the first revelation to the world of that marvellous style which, in the hands of a master, compels a language which is as rich as Greek to be also as musical.

These two great works were not the only occupations of Goethe at this time. In Wetzlar he had translated Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, and had written a number of small poems addressed to Lotte. The spring of 1773, which witnessed the publication of *Götz*, saw him actively employed as an advocate. His relations with his father became easier. His literary success brought him a number of friends,—the young Counts Stolberg, and Von Schönborn, a friend of Klopstock's. He also began to correspond with Lavater the physiognomist, and with Klopstock himself. To the latter half of this year are to be referred a number of satirical poems, aimed at prevailing follies of the time, clever and amusing, but of little permanent value. In *Peter Brey* he satirized the meddler Leuchsenring, who, with soft tread and lamblike manners, interfered with the family rela-

tions of Herder. *Satyros* is directed against the prophets of the school of Nature, who bid us return to Nature without remembering how coarse and repellent some aspects of Nature are. Bahrdt had translated the Bible into modern cultivated German; Goethe wrote a prologue to this newest of divine revelations, in which the four evangelists appear each with his attendant animal. Of yet another kind is the *Fair of Plundersweilern*, in which the hucksters and booth-keepers represent the motley variety of human life and the characteristics of modern littérateurs. It is a foretaste of the second part of *Faust*. *Harlequin's Marriage* is only preserved in fragments; it was perhaps too coarse and personal to be published. The most important of these writings is *Gods, Heroes, and Wieland*, a dialogue in the style of Lucian written at a sitting over a bottle of Burgundy, in which Alcestis,

Mercury, Hercules, Euripides, and other ancient worthies appear to Wieland in all their original greatness, and upbraid him with the mean and paltry representation of them which he had given to the world. Wieland was the apostle of an emasculated antiquity. Goethe would make the gods speak in their own large utterance if they spoke at all. Wieland revenged himself by recommending the satire in his paper, the *Deutsche Merkur*, as a delicate piece of persiflage worthy of the study of his readers. In November Goethe's sister Cornelia was married to Schlosser and left Strasburg. Goethe felt the loss deeply. She lived but a short time. Her married life was tortured with perpetual suffering, and she died in 1777.

The beginning of 1774 is marked by a new passion and a new work. Crespel had invented a plan for enlivening their social meetings ; each man was to

draw lots for a partner, and for the time to consider her as his wife. Three times Goethe drew the name of Anna Sibylla Münch, a pleasant girl of sixteen, daughter of a merchant. One of the favourite topics of the day was the trial of Beaumarchais, which ended on February 16th, 1774. Immediately afterwards his *Mémoires* or pleadings were published, and from the fourth of these

Clavigo. the play of *Clavigo* was arranged. It represents a young writer of ambition deserting the woman to whom he is engaged and breaking her heart. The fifth act, in which Clavigo kills himself, is Goethe's own creation. The real Clavigo died, a distinguished man of letters, in 1806. The piece was written in eight days, and published on June 1st. It had a great success, and still keeps the stage. But Goethe's best friends were disappointed with it. Merck told him not to write such trash, as others

could do that as well. In reality there is no period of Goethe's life in which his literary activity was so prodigious, or when he was more fully occupied with literary plans which had reference to the deepest problems of human nature. To this time belong the conceptions of *Cæsar*, *Faust*, *Mahomet*, the *Wandering Jew*, and *Prometheus*. The first was soon given up ; of the second, the first monologue, the dialogue between Faust and Mephistopheles, and part of the scenes with Gretchen, were now written. He has told us in his *Autobiography* what he intended to make of *Mahomet*. In five acts he was to show us how the purity of prophetic zeal is recognised by love, rejected by envy, sullied by human weakness, spiritualized by death. To write this drama he had studied the Koran through and through ; only a few fragments were completed. Of the *Wandering Jew* very little remains to

us. The design, conceived in Italy, of making a great work on the subject was never carried out. The *Prometheus* was completed in two acts. The monologue of *Prometheus*, included in the *Lyrical Poems*, was written at the same time; but it is doubtful whether it was intended to form part of the drama. These works are to be referred to the study of the ethics of Spinoza, for whom Goethe now began to feel a deep reverence, which continued throughout his life. The calm repose of Spinoza's mind spread over his own like a breath of peace; his systematic and well-ordered reasoning was the best antidote to Goethe's passionate waywardness. Goethe now acquired a wider view of all the relations of the moral and natural world; he felt that he had never seen the universe so clearly. The time spent at Frankfort was also largely occupied with Art. His room was covered with the works of his pencil,

and a number of poems on the subject of the artist's life arose from the same influence.

The summer of 1774 was spent in a journey to the Rhine. On July 12th Basedow, the educational reformer, came to Frankfort; three days afterwards Goethe went with him to Ems, where he found Lavater, who had been with him in the previous month. The three went down the Lahn together, and reached Coblenz on July 18th. Here the famous dinner took place at which Lavater explained the secrets of the Apocalypse to a clergyman, Basedow demonstrated the uselessness of baptism to a dancing-master, while Goethe, the worldling between the two prophets, made the best of his time with the fish and the chicken. They then went down the Rhine to Elberfeld, where Goethe found his old Strasburg friend Jung-Stilling, and back to Pempelfort, near

Rhine
journey.

Düsseldorf, the house of Fritz Jacobi, where Goethe also met Jacobi's wife Betty, his sister Charlotte, his aunt Johanna Fahlmer, and his friend W. Heinse. Their letters are full of the effect which he produced upon them. Heinse says—"I know of no man in the whole history of learning who, at such an age, was so completely full of original genius." Jacobi writes—"Goethe is the man whom my heart required; my character will now gain its proper stability; the man is complete from head to foot." Again he says, that you could not be an hour with him, without seeing that it would be ridiculous to suppose that he could think or act otherwise than he really thinks and acts. No change could make him fairer or better; his nature has followed its own development, as the growth of a seed, or of a flower on a tree. Nor were these impressions evanescent. Forty years afterwards he writes of

these times—"What hours! what days! I seemed to have a new soul. From that moment forth I was determined that I would never leave you."

Goethe returned to Frankfort at the Frankfort. beginning of August. The autumn brought new friends, drawn to him by the fame of the newly published *Werther*. Among these was Klopstock, twenty-five years older than Goethe, the author of the *Messiah*, the acknowledged head of German poets. On December 11 Goethe was surprised by the visit of a stranger, whom he at first took for Fr. Jacobi. It was Karl Ludwig von Knebel, who was travelling with the two young princes of Saxe-Weimar, the reigning duke Karl August, then just seventeen, and his younger brother Constantine. They were on their way to France with their tutor, Count Görz, and they could not pass through Frankfort without making the acquaintance of the

new genius who had risen upon their country. Goethe went to see them, was warmly received, and talked with them about the condition and prospects of Germany. This meeting decided the future course of Goethe's life. Knebel thought Goethe "the best of men, the most lovable of mankind." The princes invited him to visit them at Mainz, where they would stay longer than at Frankfort. The visit lasted from December 13 to 15, when they went on to Carlsruhe, where the duke was to meet his intended bride. Goethe took the opportunity of reconciling himself with Wieland, who lived in Weimar. On his return he found Fräulein von Klettenberg dead. "My Klettenberg is dead," he writes, "before I had an idea that she was dangerously ill. Dead and buried in my absence! She who was so dear, so much to me." Frederike was lost to him, Charlotte, Maximiliane, and his

sister were married. Some attachment was a necessity of his nature. He now came under the influence of Lili Schöne-
mann, the daughter of a rich banker, whose father was dead, but whose mother conducted the business, and held one of the most brilliant salons in Frankfurt. This passion seemed to be of a more lasting nature than the others. Goethe was drawn into the whirl of society. He is described as moving in brilliantly-lighted rooms, in a gold-laced coat, passing from party to concert, from concert to ball, held captive by a fair-haired girl with a pair of bright eyes. Such was Goethe in the carnival time. To Lili's influence we owe several of his smaller poems, *Neue Liebe neues Leben*, *Herz mein Herz was soll das geben*, *Heidenröslein*, and two little vaudevilles, *Erwin und Elmire* and *Claudine von Villa-Bella*. The first contains some pretty songs, notably *Das Veilchen*, set

Lili.

to music by Mozart. The play is founded on the ballad of "Edwin and Angelina" in the *Vicar of Wakefield*. The latter half belongs to an earlier period, and is complete in itself. *Claudine von Villa Bella* has one good character, the prodigal son Crugantino; the ballad which is sung at the crisis of the plot was written during the Rhine journey with Jacobi. To this period also belongs *Stella*, a comedy for lovers, a strange, wild play, full of extravagant passion. The weak-minded hero Fernando marries two wives one after the other. They meet together in an inn, and he is reduced to extremity of misery. He loves them both, and they both love him. Finally, the first wife, Stella, surrenders her rights, and they agree all to live together. The play in this form suggested to Canning the parody of the *Rovers; or, the Double Arrangement*. In 1806 Goethe altered the close by making

Fernando shoot himself and Stella take poison. It is seldom performed; but Stella is a fine character for a great actress. It is said to be founded on an occurrence in the Jacobi family.

Neither family approved of the engagement between the youthful couple. Goethe's parents thought Lili too much of a fine lady; they had a suspicion, which was well founded, that her wealth had no very sure foundation. Frau Schönemann did not think that Goethe, with all his genius, would make a good husband for her child. Cornelia Schlos-ser was strongly opposed to the match. Goethe tore himself away, and went for a tour in Switzerland. His companions were the brothers Stolberg, noisy, wild young noblemen, who in May had stayed at Goethe's house. They gave Goethe's mother the name of Frau Aya, which she ever afterwards retained. On his journey Goethe visited the duke of Saxe-

Swiss
journey.

Weimar and his betrothed at Carlsruhe, his sister at Emmendingen, and Lavater at Zurich. He bore with him the constant memory of Lili ; he wore a golden heart which she had given him round his neck. He climbed the St Gotthard on her birthday, and looked with longing eyes to the promised land of Italy. But a stronger power drew him home again, and he returned. At Strasburg he met his old friends, and saw Zimmermann, the writer on solitude. He showed Goethe a profile portrait of Frau von Stein, who lived at Weimar, with which he was enchanted.

Return.

He returned to Frankfort on July 20. August was spent delightfully with Lili at Offenbach ; his letters speak of nothing but her. September and the fair-time at Frankfort brought back his troubles. His position is described in the poem *Lili's Park*. He is the half-tamed bear who is held by magic bands

amongst the birds and the fish, and yet sees a door left a little open for escape, and swears that he has the power to pass it. During this last period of his passion he translated part of the Song of Solomon. He wrote some scenes in *Faust*—the walk in the garden, the first conversation with Mephistopheles, the interview with the scholar, the scene in Auerbach's cellar. *Egmont* was also begun under the stimulus of the American Rebellion. A way of escaping from his embarrassments was unexpectedly opened to him. The duke of Weimar passed through Frankfort both before and after his marriage, which took place on October 3. He invited Goethe to stay at Weimar, and it was arranged that one of the duke's household, who was expected every day with a new carriage, should bring the new guest with him. He took leave of every one, including Lili. But the carriage did not come; a

second leave-taking was impossible. He remained all day in the house working at *Egmont*, going out only at night. Once he stood by Lili's window, heard her sing his songs, and saw her shadow on the curtain. He could not linger longer in the town. He started for Heidelberg, hoping to meet the carriage, determined if it did not come to go on to Italy. He was summoned hastily back by a messenger, found the carriage at Frankfurt, and entered Weimar in the early morning of November 7, 1775. It was not for his happiness or for Lili's that they should have married. She afterwards thanked him deeply for the firmness with which he overcame a temptation to which she would have yielded.

Weimar.

At this time the smaller German courts were beginning to take an interest in German literature. Before the Seven Years' War the whole of German culture had been French. Even now, German

writers found but scant acceptance at Berlin or Vienna. The princes of the smaller States, shut out from the great world of politics, surrounded themselves with literature and Art, and with men who would be likely to give an interest to their lives. The duke of Brunswick had made Lessing his librarian at Wolfenbüttel, and had not objected to the publication of *Emilia Galotti*. Emerich Joseph, the worldly elector and archbishop of Mainz, was devoted to Munich and the theatre, and made his stage one of the best in Europe. The margrave of Baden had invited Klopstock to his court, and delighted to associate with himself the author of the *Messiah*, the "poet of religion and of his country." The duke of Würtemberg paid special attention to education ; he promoted the views of Schubart, and founded the school in which Schiller was educated. Hanover offered a home to Zimmer-

mann, and encouraged the development of Schlegel. Darmstadt was specially fortunate. Caroline, the wife of the landgrave, had surrounded herself with a literary circle, of which Merck was the moving spirit. She had collected and privately printed the odes of Klopstock; and her death, in 1774, seemed to leave Darmstadt a desert. Her daughter Louise, the youngest of eight children, seemed to have inherited something of her mother's qualities, veiled by a serious and retiring temper. She married, on October 3, 1775, the young duke of Weimar, who had just attained his majority. She reigned over that illustrious court respected and admired, but repelled rather than attracted by its brilliancy and eccentricity. The place which she would naturally have occupied was taken by the duchess Amalia, mother of the grand-duke. She was of the house of Brunswick, and after two years of mar-

riage had been left a widow at nineteen with two sons. She committed their education to Count Görz, a prominent character in the history of the time. She afterwards summoned Wieland to instruct the elder, and Knebel to teach the younger. The *Deutsche Merkur*, founded in 1773 to diminish the influence of the school of Klopstock, gave Weimar importance in the literary world. The duchess was a great lover of the stage; and the best play-writers of Germany worked for Weimar. The palace and the theatre were burnt down in 1774, and the duchess had to content herself with amateurs. After her son's marriage she lived in the simple country houses which surround the capital, the lofty Ettersburg, the low-lying Tiefurt, the far-seeing height of Belvedere. Each of these was awakened to new life by the genius of Goethe. The duke, eighteen years of age, was simple in his

tastes, a hater of etiquette and constraint, true, honest, and steadfast, fond of novelty and excitement, of great courage and activity ; his impulses, rarely checked, led him rather to chivalrous enterprise than to undesirable excess. His brother, Prince Constantine, had perhaps more talent but less character than the grand-duke. He took but little part in the Weimar life, and died in 1793.

Goethe in
Weimar.

Upon this society Goethe, in the strength and beauty of youth, rose like a star. From the moment of his arrival he became the inseparable and indispensable companion of the grand-duke. He subdued the affections of all he met with. Wieland said that his soul was as full of him as a dewdrop of the morning sun. He was, he said, take him all in all, the greatest, best, most noble human being that God had ever created. The first months at Weimar were spent in a wild

round of pleasure. Goethe was treated as a guest. In the autumn, journeys, rides, shooting parties; in the winter, balls, masquerades, skating parties by torchlight, dancing at peasants' feasts, filled up their time. Evil reports flew about Germany; the court of Weimar had a bad name; Klopstock wrote letters of solemn advice, and forbade his young friend Stolberg to accept an appointment which the duke had offered to him. We do not know, and we need not examine, how much of these reports was true. Goethe wrote to Klopstock that if Stolberg came he would find them no worse, and perhaps even better, than he had known them before. We may believe that no decencies were disregarded except the artificial restrictions of courtly etiquette. Goethe and the duke dined together and bathed together; the duke addressed his friend by the familiar *thou*. Goethe slept in his chamber, and tended

him when he was ill. In the spring Goethe had to decide whether he would go or stay. In April the duke gave him the little garden-house by the side of the Ilm, with its lofty roof, in which he lived for the next eight years. In June he invested him with the title, a matter so important in German eyes, of Geheimlegationsrath, with a seat and voice in the privy council, and an income of £180 a year. By accepting this position he was bound to Weimar for ever. We may here mention the different grades of service through which Goethe passed. In January, 1779, he undertook the commission of war; on September 5, 1779, he became Geheim-rath; in September, 1781, he received an addition to his salary of £30. This was afterwards raised by £60 more, and in 1816 he received £450, with an additional allowance for the expense of a carriage. In April, 1782, he was ennobled by the

emperor, and took for his arms a silver star in an azure field; in June of the same year he became president of the chamber *ad interim*. We know that Goethe devoted himself with industry and enthusiasm to the public business; he made himself acquainted with every part of his master's territory; he did his best to develop its resources; he opened mines and disseminated education; he threw himself with vigour into the reconstruction of the tiny army. A complete account of his labours in this field cannot be known until the secrets of the Goethe house at Weimar are fully revealed to the curious. We shall then perhaps find that Goethe cannot be fairly charged with want of patriotism, or coldness to the national interest, and that his apparent indifference to the rising of 1813 must be considered in connexion with his resistance to the encroachments of Austria at an earlier time.

Frau von
Stein.

Goethe's life was at no time complete without the influence of a noble-hearted woman. This he now found in Charlotte von Stein, a lady of the court, wife of the master of the horse. She was thirty-three years of age, mother of seven children. His letters to her extend over a period of fifty years. Until his journey to Italy he made her acquainted with every action, every thought of his mind, all the working of his brain. He calls her by every endearing epithet—the sweet entertainment of his inmost heart, the dear unconquerable source of his happiness, the sweet dream of his life, the anodyne of his sorrows, his happiness, his gold, his magnet, whom he loves in presence and absence, sleeping and waking, from whom he can never bear to be parted. Many of Goethe's writings were from this time inspired by the necessities of the court. One group of them is formed by the succession of

masks or ballets which were performed to celebrate the birthday of the grand-duchess Louise. *The Four Seasons, The Procession of Laplanders, the Nine Female Virtues, The Dance of the Planets*, are sufficiently explained by their names. Others were called for by the amateur theatre, which now was forced to supply the place of the regular drama. The stage was often set in the open air, the seats cut out of turf; the side scenes, of trimmed box, still exist at Belvedere and Ettersburg. The actors were the duchess-mother and her sons, the civil servants and the officers, the ladies in waiting and the pages. Goethe was very good in comic parts; in solemn tragedy, as in his own *Orestes*, he could best interpret the dignity of the ancient stage. Musæus, head-master of the public school, was set to play low comedy; Knebel represented the dignified hero. The chief professional sup-

port of the stage was Corona Schröter, whom the duke and Goethe personally carried off from Leipsic. On this visit he saw, after a long absence, Catherine Schönpkopf, Oeser, and other friends of his youth. Goethe represented most of his earlier pieces on the Weimar stage. He wrote nothing of great importance for it till the first sketch of his *Iphigenie*. But several smaller pieces owe their origin to this cause. *Proserpina* is a melodrama ; *Die Geschwister*, though it plays but half an hour, is a psychological study of rare delicacy and interest ; *Jery und Bätely* and *Die Fischerin* are little operas composed to suit the Weimar taste. *Scherz, List, und Rache* is an imitation of the Italian style.

Journeys.

Besides numerous visits to the court of the Thuringian princes, sojournings at Dornberg and at Ilmenau, that retired nook of the Weimar fatherland, which still attracts many a pilgrim lover of

Goethe, the first ten years at Weimar were interrupted by longer journeys. One of these was the winter Harz journey in December, 1777, undertaken suddenly to make the acquaintance of Plessing, a self-torturing hypochondriac, who had written to the poet for advice. With Goethe's help Plessing recovered from his melancholy, visited him at Weimar, and entertained him, as professor at Duisburg, on his return from the campaign in France. A visit to Dessau inspired the improvements of the park and grounds at Weimar, which now make it so attractive. The close of 1779 was occupied by a winter journey to Switzerland, undertaken with the duke and a small retinue. Two days were spent at Frankfort with Goethe's parents. Sesenheim was visited, and left with satisfaction and contentment. At Strasburg the travellers found Lili happily married, with a

new-born child. At Emmendingen Goethe stood by his sister's grave, and saw her successor, Johanna Fahlmer, Jacobi's aunt. The Swiss journey began at Basel. The chief object of it was to forward the health and education of the young duke. It was a bold plan to execute in October and November. From Bern they made the tour of the Bernese Oberland. From Geneva, by the advice of De Saussure, they visited Mont Blanc and the valley of Chamouni; they crossed the Furka, not without danger, in the middle of November, descended the St Gotthard to Lucerne, and visited Lavater at Zurich, the goal and summit of their tour. From this time Lavater lost his influence over Goethe; and in 1786 the poet would gladly have run away from Weimar to avoid him. In December the friends went by the lake of Constance and the falls of the Rhine to Stuttgart, where,

on December 14, Goethe saw Schiller for the first time. He was a student at the Academy, and in Goethe's presence received the prize.

The return to Weimar, on January 13, was the beginning of a new era. The period of genius and eccentricity was at an end; that of order and regularity succeeded. As an outward sign of the change, the duke cut off his pigtail, an example which was long without imitators. Wieland said that the Swiss winter journey was the greatest of Goethe's dramas. In the same serious mood Goethe began to write history. He chose for his subject Duke Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, the knight-errant of the Reformation. He spent much time and trouble in collecting materials, but at length reasonably concluded that his strength lay elsewhere. At this time also he began to write *Tasso*, and adapted the *Birds* of Aristophanes to

modern circumstances. His deeper thoughts were concentrated in *Wilhelm Meister*. Countess Werther, the sister of the great minister Baron von Stein, whom he visited at Neunheiligen, was transferred in living portraiture to its pages. His efforts for the development of the duke's dominion naturally led him to the study of science. The opening and direction of mines induced him to study geology; the classification of early forms of life led him to osteology and anatomy. Goethe was always fond of children. The young Herders and Wielands spent much time in his garden, sometimes digging for Easter eggs which had been carefully concealed. In the spring of 1783 Fritz, the son of Charlotte von Stein, then ten years old, came to live with him in his garden house. In the autumn they took a journey together in the Harz. At Ilmenau was written the touching poem

of that name on the duke's birthday. Goethe reviews in it their common friendship and activity as far as it has yet gone, and a few days afterwards, as he slept in the hut on the Gickelhahn, he wrote in pencil the world-known lines in which he anticipates for himself that rest and silence which then held enchained the summits of the hills and the birds of the wood. In the following year another journey was undertaken in the Harz for the study of mineralogy. But this was only a relaxation from more serious affairs. In 1785 the Fürstenbund or league of princes was formed, under the supremacy of Frederick the Great, to resist the ambition of Austria under Joseph II. The duke of Saxe-Weimar took an important part in forming this league, and in the negotiations which preceded it. Goethe was his indispensable adviser, and must on this occasion, if not on others, have taken a

keen interest in politics and in the independence of Germany.

Leaves
Weimar.

The year 1786 marks an epoch in Goethe's life. He had now been ten years in Weimar, and he must have felt that his own inward development, and the work which he was most fitted to do in the world, were not advancing as favourably as they should. He had written little of first-rate importance. His *Lyrics* were of intense beauty and of deep meaning, but they were short and fugitive. He had brought with him from Frankfort the sketches of *Faust* and *Egmont*, but little had been done to them since. His occasional writings for the amateur theatre, or for court festivities, were not such as to add to his solid reputation in Germany. *Iphigenie* was the one great work of poetry which belongs entirely to this period; but that had not received its final form. *Tasso* was conceived; but only two acts were

written, and these in prose. *Wilhelm Meister* is the most exact expression of this portion of Goethe's life ; but loftily as it now towers above the level of his smaller dramas, it did not then satisfy the author, nor was it in a state to be published. For the completion of these works Goethe required leisure and repose, impossible to obtain in the distraction and pleasures of a court. This became more apparent to him as he set himself to collect his scattered writings. Four volumes were soon completed ; but the preparation of the other four convinced him how much labour many of his poems still required for perfection. Another cause of discontent was his relation to Frau von Stein. It could not have been more intimate. She was all to Goethe, and more than Gretchen, Frederike, Lili, or his sister Cornelia had been. He communicated to her every thought and every action of his

life. The relation was pardonable ; to a character like Goethe's it was natural ; but it became every year more difficult and more full of danger. The ardent devotion which sat well on the impetuosity of youth was less becoming and less possible to the man of middle age. Yet the tie could not be severed without a struggle, and the wrench could not be effected without an enforced absence. To these necessities, the need of quiet for composition, and for deliberately rearranging the circumstances of his life, was added the stress of other impulses. Goethe had all his life been fascinated by the practice of Art. Indeed it was not until he had discovered at Rome the limitation of his powers, that he definitely renounced the hope of becoming an artist. He tried almost every branch in turn. He drew in pencil and in sepia, sketched, painted in oil, engraved on copper and wood, and etched.

For these occupations he had but little leisure ; at this time he attributed his slow improvement rather to want of labour than to want of power. He saw infinite possibilities of advance in a life of freedom spent under the inspiration of sunny skies, and amidst the environment of the highest art.

Of still deeper interest and importance were his scientific researches. In these he aspired to detect the secrets of nature ; he succeeded in seeing, as in a vision, the great scheme of evolution applied to all phenomena of the natural and moral world, which the labours of many workers have revealed to us in our own day. He longed for time and leisure to perfect these ideas, to base them on solid fact. Goethe has not added much of positive value to the treasury of scientific truth, but he deserves the credit of having discerned the right method of inquiry when it was

Science.

obscure to many, and of having thrown that glow of imagination over dry and technical inquiry, without which no great discoveries can be made. His inquiries into the nature of light belong to a later time. He began with physiognomy under the auspices of Lavater. From this he was led to the study of anatomy, and especially to the comparison of the skeletons of men and animals. In this department he made a real discovery, that the intermaxillary bone which exists in the lower animals is found in the human subject in a rudimentary state,—that it is seen distinctly in youth, but, as years advance, is united with the body of the skull. The discovery that the skull itself is only a development of the vertebræ of the spine was made a little later. Goethe was led to this further step by picking up the head of a sheep on the shore of the Lido at Venice. The care of his garden-cottage naturally led him to

the study of plants. He soon found himself attracted to wide and comprehensive generalizations. The *Metamorphoses of Plants* was not published till 1790, but the idea which had possession of his mind was a solid contribution to the science of botany. Goethe sought to discover an original or standard flower, from which, as from a Platonic ideal type, all existing flowers were deflexions and aberrations. In this he followed an unscientific method ; but he clearly saw that all the different parts of the plant, except the stem and the root, might be regarded as modifications of the leaf ; that leaf, calyx, corolla, bud, pistil, and stamen were all referable to the same type ; and that whether a plant produced leaves, or flowers, or fruit, depended on the differentiation of the nutrition which it received. Less fortunate were his speculations in geology, to which he devoted a very large portion of his time

and thoughts. It is something that he recognised the importance and reality of that science, then in its infancy, which has had to undergo more than its due share of obloquy and distrust. But he was of necessity a follower of Werner, who based his classification of rocks rather on the minerals which they contained than upon an examination of the fossil remains of organic life. All these causes contributed together to one end. His desire to complete the great poetical works which he had begun, to disentangle his life from the complexities which had entwined themselves round it, to give a fair trial to his impulses towards Art, to afford opportunity for the careful and systematic interrogation of Nature, and, above all, a longing to possess his soul in peace, and solemnly to probe in silence the depths of his own being, conspired together to drive him from Weimar to the land which he had

yearned after from boyhood. The resolution, slowly formed, was boldly executed. In the summer of 1785 he had visited Carlsbad for the first time, passed a pleasant month in the company of the duchess Louise, Herder, and Frau von Stein. In July, 1786, he paid it a second visit. After five weeks of brilliant society, very favourable to his health, spent in revising his works for the press, he stole secretly away. The duke alone knew that he designed an absence of some duration. In the strictest incognito, in the guise of a German merchant, he drove alone to the land of the citron and the orange.

Goethe's Italian journey, the most ^{Italy.} momentous epoch in the development of his intellectual life, lasted from September 3, 1786, to June 18, 1788. Assuming the common German name of Müller, he journeyed in the strictest incognito by way of Munich, where he

studied the picture gallery and the collection of antiquities ; by the Lake of Garda, where he began his metrical version of the *Iphigenie* ; by Verona, where he saw the first specimen of Roman building in Italy in the stupendous amphitheatre ; by Vicenza, where he was attracted by the grace and harmony of the classical Palladio ; by Padua, where he neglected the frescos of Giotto, but rose to a clear conception of the form of the *original plant* by the marks on the leaves of a palm in the botanical garden ; to Venice, where for the first time he was able to taste the charm and richness of southern life. As he proceeded farther, Ferrara spoke to him of Tasso ; Bologna showed him the great masters of the academic school, who have now grown pale and dim before the predecessors of Raphael ; Florence interested him a little ; Assisi drew his attention, not to the triple church of

Saint Francis, that unrivalled museum of religious Art, but to the little ruined temple which no modern traveller would notice but for the name of Goethe; Spoleto again delighted him with the remains of ancient architecture. He reached Rome on October 28. His first stay lasted till February. The constant companion of his studies was the painter Tischbein, who helped him to disentangle the many difficulties of the old Rome and the new. He lived chiefly among the German artists and men of letters who frequented the Caffé Greco. Among these were Angelica Kaufmann and Moritz, known for his travels in England, who deepened Goethe's knowledge of German versification, and prepared him for the composition of *Iphigenia*. Although Goethe occupied himself chiefly with drawing, he was able to announce on June 6 that this work was finished. The second *Iphi-*

Rome.

genie, written in verse, was the first important fruit of the Italian journey. It is in very strong contrast with *Götz von Berlichingen*. It is written in the strictest classical form. Although based on the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides, it has little in common with it. In Euripides Thoas is represented as a cruel barbarian, against whom it is justifiable to employ every artifice of fraud or violence. In Goethe the characters are ennobled by a higher principle; and the struggle between truth and falsehood is made a prominent motive of the piece. When Thoas discovers that, according to the oracle of Apollo, the return of Orestes' sister to Greece will satisfy the anger of the gods, he gives his consent, and his last words are a friendly farewell. Towards the end of February Goethe left Rome for Naples. Here he was attracted less by the remains of antiquity, even the new revelations of Herculaneum

and Pompeii, than by the prospects of Nature, the bay, the islands, the volcano, the thousand beauties which make the gulf unrivalled in the world, and by the multitudinous and teeming life which throngs the endless quays that line the shore. Sorrento stimulated him to the revisal of *Torquato Tasso*, but he did not complete the drama till his return from Italy. It did not appear in print till the spring of 1790. The play had a special fascination for him as a picture of his own distracted life. He could depict with feeling the struggle between the actual and the ideal, the ill-assorted connexion of a passionate poet with the jealous and artificial environment of a court. At the end of March Goethe sailed to Sicily; rolled up in his cloak, he meditated the composition of his *Tasso*. Sicily struck him, as it must strike all travellers who have studied the ancient world, as a revelation of

*Tasso.**Sicily.*

Greece. It is, if one may say so, more Greek than Greece itself. Its mountains, streams, trees, flowers, the form of its boats and its pottery, the habits of the people, the quivering smile of the bright blue sea fringed with golden sand, represent completely the Greece of the *Odyssey* and of the choruses of Euripides. Goethe was overmastered by this powerful influence. He sketched and began *Nausicaa*, the story of the *Odyssey* in dramatic form, which always remained a fragment. He returned to Rome in June. The rest of the year was spent in the city and its neighbourhood, in the serious study of drawing, for which unfortunately he had but little talent, and in the composition of *Egmont*, a work begun with the approval of his father in the early Frankfort days. It was finished in September, 1787, and appeared in the Easter of the following year. Although *Egmont*

Egmont.

still keeps the stage, it has grave faults. It is an unfortunate mixture of the natural and ideal treatment. The licence with which the scenes are transposed in modern performance shows how much the work lacks symmetry and cohesion. Schiller criticized it severely, as being untrue to history. He described the close, where all difficulties are solved by the appearance of Clärchen, as a *deus ex machinâ*, or a *salto mortale* into the world of opera. The music of Beethoven has contributed to it a charm of art which was necessary to its completeness. Besides this, Goethe re-wrote for publication his early vaudevilles of *Erwin und Elmire* and *Claudine von Villa Bella*. The carnival of 1788 was of importance to his experience. He wrote some scenes of *Faust*: the scene *Faust.* in the witches' kitchen was composed in the Borghese gardens. At the end of April he took a sad farewell of Italy,

and arrived at Weimar in the middle of June.

Return to
Weimar.

From this time his life takes a new colour. He had learned in Italy not only new principles of Art,—not only that a work of Art, whatever of Gothic ornament it may possess, must be solid, firm, and simple in its construction as a Grecian temple,—but he had also learned that life itself should be a work of Art. He was determined henceforth to be himself, to break the bonds which had confined him and the distractions which had confused him, to possess his soul sacred and inviolable for the purposes of his life. He was relieved of the presidency of the chamber and of the war commission, but in a manner which did him the greatest honour. His relations with Frau von Stein, which had been one reason of his leaving Weimar, began to cool. One of their last friendly meetings was in a journey to Rudolstadt

where Goethe met Schiller. Neither knew the influence which the other would have upon his life. Their relations were those of shyness, and partly even of dislike. Goethe's friendship with Frau von Stein was to receive a final blow. In the autumn of 1788, walking aimlessly through the park, he met Christiane Vulpius, a young girl who presented him with a petition in favour of her brother. She had golden curling locks, round cheeks, laughing eyes, a neatly rounded figure; she looked, as has been said, "like a young Dionysus." Goethe took her into his house, and she became his wife in conscience, and the mother of his children. He did not marry her till 1806, when the terrors of the French occupation made him anxious for the position of his eldest son. It is true she had but little education, and that he could not take her into society; but she made him a good

Christiane
Vulpius.

and loving wife, and her quick mother-wit made her available as an intellectual companion. To these days of early married life belong the Roman elegies, which, although Italian and pagan in form, colour, and sensuality, were written in Germany from home experiences.

Cam-
paigns

We must pass rapidly over the next six years, until Goethe's genius received a new impulse and direction by his friendship with Schiller. In the spring of 1790 he travelled to Venice, to meet the duchess Amalia. The Venetian epigrams, still more outspoken in sensuality than the Roman, were the fruit of this journey. In the autumn of the same year he accompanied the duke to Silesia, the first of those military journeys which strike so discordant a note in the harmonious tenor of his existence. The year 1791 offered a quiet contrast to the movement of the year before. He began to take a more special interest

in the University at Jena, in which his young friend Fritz von Stein had now entered as a student, and his time was more and more occupied with the study of colours, the least happy and successful of his scientific labours. In the autumn of 1791 Goethe was able to devote himself regularly to a task which had informally occupied his first years in Weimar. The new theatre was completed, and Goethe was made director of it. It was in this capacity that he was best known to the citizens of Weimar. He had the final decision on every detail of piece, scenery, and acting; in later years his seat was in a large arm-chair in the middle of the pit, and applause was scarcely permitted until he gave the signal for it. The German stage owes perhaps as much to Goethe as to Lessing. The *répertoire* of the Weimar theatre was stocked with pieces of solid merit which long

held their place. Shakespeare was seriously performed, and the actors were instructed in the delivery of blank verse. Stress was laid on the excellence of the *ensemble* as against the predominance of particular stars. The theatre was considered as a school not only of elevating amusement but of national culture. Goethe wrote the *Gross Cophta* for the Weimar stage, a piece founded on the history of Cagliostro and the diamond necklace. He was fascinated by the story as a foreboding of the coming horrors of the Revolution. In these events he was destined to take a more active part than he expected. In August, 1792, he accompanied the duke to the campaign in the Ardennes. Passing by Frankfort, where he visited his mother, he joined the allied armies at Longwy. He beguiled the tedious siege of Verdun by writing an account of his theory of colours in a leaky tent ;

and on the disastrous day of Valmy, which he recognised as the birth of a new era, he sought the thickest of the fight that he might experience the dangerous rapture of the cannon-fever. He retreated with the Prussian army, spent five weeks with his friend Jacobi at Pempelfort, and on his return to Weimar at the end of the year found that the duke had built him a spacious house in the square now called the Goethe platz.

In 1793 he went with his master to the siege of Mainz. He continued his optical studies during the bombardment, witnessed the marching out of the garrison, and was one of the first to enter the conquered town. He received leave to withdraw, and went to his mother at Frankfort, and persuaded her to sell the old house and its contents, and to provide a more convenient home for her old age. There was some talk

of her coming to Weimar. In the autumn of this year the duke left the Prussian service, and Goethe could look forward to a period of peace. He was chiefly occupied with the management of the theatre, and for this he wrote two pieces, both of which had reference to the politics of the time. The *Bürger-general* is a satire on the Revolution, and was long a rock of offence to Goethe's friends, who thought that he should have hailed with delight the birth of a new era. The *Aufgeregten*, left unfinished, sketched the outbreak of the Revolution in a country town, and would have declared the author's views with greater distinctness. But the feelings of scorn and contempt which he felt for the cowardice, cunning, and perfidy of mankind were expressed in a work of greater magnitude. He had good reason to deplore the misery of the time. His mother's home in Frankfort

was broken up ; Schlosser, his brother-in-law, had retired to Auerbach ; Jacobi was flying to Holstein. Goethe took the old German epic of *Reynard the Fox*, with which he had long been familiar, and which, under the guise of animals, represents the conflicting passions of men, and re-wrote it in flowing German hexameters.

Thus far he had produced but little since his return from Italy. He was now to undergo the most powerful influence which had as yet affected his life. His friendship with Schiller was now to begin, an alliance which, in the closeness of its intimacy and its deep effect on the character of both friends, has scarcely a parallel in literary history. If Schiller was not at this time at the height of his reputation, he had written many of the works which have made his name famous. He was ten years younger than Goethe. The *Räuber*

Friendship with Schiller.

plays the same part in his literary history as *Götz* plays in that of Goethe. This had been followed by *Fiesco* and *Kabale und Liebe*. The second period of Schiller's life had begun with his friendship with Körner, and his residence in Saxony. Here he wrote the *Hymn of Joy*, and completed *Don Carlos*. In 1787 he settled at Weimar. He found the place deserted, the duke in the Prussian camp, Goethe in Italy. He applied himself to history, wrote the *Revolt of the Netherlands*, and studied the literature and art of Greece. In 1789, mainly upon Goethe's recommendation, Schiller was made professor of history at the University of Jena, although he was afraid lest the scholars should discover that they knew more history than the teacher. Here he made a successful marriage, and worked seriously at his *History of the Thirty Years' War*. In 1794 Schiller had

arranged with the publisher, Cotta of Augsburg, whose name is from this time indissolubly connected with the history of German literature, for the production of a new literary journal. It was to be called the *Horen*, and the most distinguished German writers were to contribute to it. Goethe accepted the invitation willingly. The work was designed to mark an epoch in German taste, and it did so. It soon had two thousand subscribers. Among those who promised to contribute were not only Matthisson, Herder, Knebel, Fritz Jacobi, and Gleim, but the brothers Humboldt, the veteran Kant, the youthful Fichte, who had just begun to lecture in Jena, and, at a later period, the brothers Schlegel. Schiller opened the first number of the journal with his letters on the "Æsthetic Education of the Human Race." Goethe contributed the "Unterhaltungen deutscher

Ausgewanderten," a series of stories told by a number of German emigrants who had been driven to cross the Rhine by the invasion of the French. The most remarkable of these stories is the "Märchen," a wild and mystic tale, which has been the subject of as much controversy and of as many interpretations as the second part of *Faust*. Goethe also published in the *Horen* the "Römische Elegien," the flavour of which even Karl August found a little too strong. The first effect of Schiller's influence on Goethe was the completion of *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. Goethe had conceived the plan of the work twenty years before, and the first six books had been written before the Italian journey. It was now finished by the addition of two more books. It stands in the first rank of Goethe's writings. His aim in it is to attain to perfect objectivity of tone, to represent

*Wilhelm
Meister.*

men as they are, and to pass no judgment upon them. The hero passes with weak irresolution through a number of ordinary circumstances, apparently the sport of fortune and the plaything of chance, yet all these experiences have their definite result in the training of his character. Like the son of Kish, he goes forth to seek his father's asses and finds a kingdom. The unearthly charm of the child Mignon, the dark fate which shrouds the aged harper like the doom of Œdipus, the uncertain yearning after a happier home in brighter climes, give a deeper undertone to the prevailing lightness of the story. The style is exquisitely soft and flowing. It has the sweetness and simplicity of *Werther*, but is more mellow and more mature. The sixth book is occupied with the *Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele*, a piece of the autobiography of Goethe's early friend Fräulein von Klettenberg,

altered to suit its new surroundings. The *Musen Almanach* for 1796, edited by Schiller, was enriched by some of Goethe's most exquisite poems—*Die Nähe des Geliebten*, *Meeres Stille*, and *Glückliche Fahrt*. The storm of criticism which was aroused by the *Horen*, and the little success which, after the first numbers, it met with from the public, determined the two friends to retaliate upon their aggressors. The poems of Martial contain a number of epigrams written in two lines, describing the numberless little presents or *xenia*, which it was customary for friends to exchange at Rome during the time of the Saturnalia. The name was borrowed by the two poets, and the *Xenien* was a convenient vehicle for the expression of their opinion on every subject. The newspapers of the day were the first object of attack, but they soon went farther afield. The epigrams were

written in Schiller's rooms at Jena. It is impossible to fix the authorship of the *Xenien*; one conceived the idea, the other wrote the lines; one wrote the hexameter, the other the pentameter; they intended the authorship as well as the ownership of the copyright to be one and indivisible. Notwithstanding this, the collection has been broken up. There is no guarantee that the epigrams which appear in the separate works of either poet were really written by the authors to whom they are ascribed; some are reprinted in the works of both; some have remained unprinted altogether. They appeared in the *Musen Almanach* for 1797, together with the Venetian elegies mentioned above. It is needless to say that they roused the writers whom they attacked to unspeakable fury, and were the occasion of a copious literature. A more solid result of the friendship between

*Hermann
und
Dorothea.*

the poets was the production of *Hermann und Dorothea*. It is a German idyll ; the story is taken from the sufferings of Lutherans driven out in the early part of the 18th century from the province of Salzburg, but Goethe has given it the character of his own time. He had seen much of the suffering produced by the French Revolution, and he wished this poem to be a reflexion in a tiny mirror of the storms and convulsions of the great world. In its literary form it is a descendant of Voss's *Luise*. It was conceived at Ilmenau in August, 1796, and finished in the following spring. Schiller tells us how it was composed with extraordinary ease and rapidity. During nine days Goethe produced 150 lines a day. You have only to shake the tree, as Schiller said, and ripe apples will tumble down about you. The lines thus hastily written underwent a careful revision. Contem-

poraneous with *Hermann und Dorothea* is the production of *Wallensteins Lager* by Schiller, which was written with the advice and assistance of his brother poet. The completion of this cycle of plays falls two years later.

The year 1797 is the year of ballads. Ballads.
In his garden house at Jena, Schiller worked diligently at this vein, that perhaps for which he was best suited, and in which he most nearly rivals Goethe. Goethe wrote *Die Braut von Korinth*, *Gott und die Bayadere*, and *Der Zauberlehrling*; and the whole collection was published in the *Musen Almanach* for 1798. The latter half of this year was occupied with a tour in Switzerland. Before its commencement he visited his mother at Frankfort for the last time, and presented to her his wife and his son. It was a year of extraordinary activity. Besides the ballads and the researches in the morphology of plants and insects,

Goethe translated a great part of the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, wrote a number of essays on the question of æsthetics, and worked at his long neglected *Faust*. Of this he wrote the dedication, the "Prologue in Heaven," and the "Golden Marriage of Oberon and Titania"—so powerful was the effect of intellectual sympathy and stimulus.

The six years which succeeded Goethe's return from his third Swiss tour, although they embrace the period in which he and Schiller were in daily co-operation, have left us little of permanent worth from the older poet. On the other hand, they are the years of Schiller's greatest activity. The great trilogy of *Wallenstein*, perhaps the highest point of Schiller's genius, was followed by *Maria Stuart*, the *Jungfrau von Orleans*, the *Braut von Messina*, and *Wilhelm Tell*. From the end of 1799 Schiller was permanently

settled in Weimar ; a dramatic school was founded, and the representation of these classical dramas was the glory of the Weimar stage. During these years Goethe was occupied with *Faust*, with his researches into the theory of colours and of biological development, with the conduct of the theatre and the practical encouragement of Art. In 1798 the *Horen* died a natural death, and was succeeded by the *Propyläen*, a journal of literature and criticism, which, although it contained many essays by Goethe, never exceeded a circulation of 300. In the spring 1799 the study of Homer incited Goethe to sketch a long epic poem on the subject of Achilles. Schiller did his best to encourage the work. The first canto was rapidly completed, but it had no successor. Goethe contented himself with translating the works of others, and prepared the *Mahomet* and *Tancred* of Voltaire for the Leipsic stage.

In the first days of the new century Goethe suffered from a dangerous attack of scarlatina. His friends feared for his life. Frau von Stein recalled her forgotten friendship, and showed kindness to his son. After his recovery he sketched out what was the most important work of these years, a trilogy on the subject of the French Revolution; of this only the first part, the *Natürliche Tochter*, was completed. The story was a true one of a princess of the French house of Conti. The play is written with the full beauty of Goethe's style, and some passages and effects are worthy of his highest genius. But as a whole it fails. It has the quality, which in a drama must be a fault, so characteristic of Goethe's later writing, of too great universality of treatment. The characters are not living beings, but abstractions; and the language is vague and general, rather than clear and

defined. The play was performed at Weimar on April 2, 1803. Two masterpieces of Schiller—the *Braut von Messina* and the *Jungfrau von Orleans*—preceded and followed it by a few weeks. At the end of this year Madame de Staël arrived in Weimar, accompanied by Benjamin Constant. She had heard of the fame of this new Parnassus, and she was bent on proclaiming the intellectual superiority of Germany to the world. Goethe at first fled from her, as Byron did at a later period. He hid himself in Jena, but was recalled by order of the duke. The result of the conversations in the salons of Weimar is contained in her book *De l'Allemagne*. In March she was suddenly recalled by the death of her father, the minister Necker. Goethe was at this time the centre to which the most distinguished men of all kinds in Germany naturally turned. He was most

Madame
de Staël.

Schiller's
death.

intimate with Zelter the musician, with whom he maintained a full correspondence ; with Wilhelm von Humboldt, the statesman-scholar ; with F. A. Wolf, the founder of the science of philology ; with Gottfried Hermann, the best authority on Greek metres. But the friendship which was worth all these was soon to be severed. In the beginning of 1805 Goethe was convinced that either he or Schiller would die in that year. In January they were both seized with illness ; Schiller had finished his *Phædra* and begun to work at his *Demetrius*. Goethe was translating the *Neveu de Rameau* of Diderot. Schiller was the first to recover, and visiting Goethe in his sick room, fell on his neck and kissed him with intense emotion. On April 29 they saw each other for the last time. Schiller was on his way to the theatre, whither Goethe was too ill to accompany him. They parted at

the door of Schiller's house. Schiller died on the evening of the 9th of May. No one dared to tell Goethe the sad news, but he saw in the faces of those who surrounded him that Schiller must be very ill. On the morrow of Schiller's death, when his wife entered his room, he said, "Is it not true that Schiller was very ill yesterday?" She began to sob. He then cried, "He is dead!" "Thou hast spoken it thyself," she answered. Once more he cried, "He is dead!" and turning aside covered his weeping eyes with his hands. Goethe at first intended to have completed *Demetrius* as a memorial of his friend, but a happier inspiration was to arrange a performance of Schiller's great poem of *The Bell*, and to crown it by an epilogue. Since that time Schiller and Goethe have been inseparable in the minds of their countrymen, and have reigned as twin stars in the literary

firmament. If Schiller does not hold the first place, it is at least true that he is more beloved, although Goethe may be more admired. It would be invidious to separate them. But it is evident that the best fruits of Schiller's muse were produced when he was most closely under Goethe's influence, and the foreign student of German culture has ground for believing that at some future time the glory of the lesser luminary will be absorbed in that of the greater, and the name of Goethe will represent alone and unrivalled the literature of his age and country.

Napoleon. Schiller was happy in the occasion of his death. He did not see the troubles which immediately afterwards burst upon Thuringia. On October 14, 1806, the battle of Jena was fought. The court had fled from Weimar ; only the duchess Louise remained. In the evening of the defeat Weimar was plundered by the

conquering troops. Many of Goethe's friends lost everything they possessed. His property and perhaps his life was saved by the firmness of Christiane, and afterwards by the billeting of Marshal Augereau in his house. On the 15th Napoleon entered the town, but Goethe did not go to see him. The duchess obtained her husband's pardon by her entreaties. It was not till the autumn of 1808 that Napoleon and Goethe, perhaps the two greatest men then living in Europe, met and conversed. It was at the congress of Erfurt, where the sovereigns and princes of Europe were assembled. Goethe's presence was commanded by the duke. He was attracted at least as much by the prospect of seeing Talma as of meeting Napoleon. He was invited to an audience on October 2; Talleyrand, Berthier, and Savary were present. The emperor sat at a large round table eating his break-

fast. He beckoned Goethe to approach him, and said to him, "Vous êtes un homme!" He asked how old he was, expressed his wonder at the freshness of his appearance, said that he had read *Werther* through seven times, and made some acute remarks on the management of the plot. Then, after an interruption, he said that tragedy ought to be the school of kings and peoples; that there was no subject worthier of treatment than the death of Cæsar, which Voltaire had treated insufficiently. A great poet would have given prominence to Cæsar's plans for the regeneration of the world, and shown what a loss mankind had suffered by his murder. He invited Goethe to Paris; that was the centre of great movements; there he would find subjects worthy of his skill. They parted with mutual admiration. There were three portraits of Napoleon in Goethe's study.

In the same year, 1808, an edition of *Faust*. Goethe's works in thirteen volumes was published by Cotta at Tübingen. It is remarkable as containing the first part of *Faust* in its complete form. The principal portions of the drama had already been published as a fragment in 1790. It had then attracted but little attention. Heyne wrote of it—"There are fine passages in it, but with them there are such things as only he could give to the world who takes other men to be blockheads." Wieland and Schiller were apparently dissatisfied with it. It had perhaps the appearance of patchwork, as it was made up of fragments which had been written at very different periods of his life. The idea of writing *Faust* seems to have come to Goethe in his earliest manhood. He was brooding over it at the same time with *Götz von Berlichingen*; but at Strasburg he spoke to Herder of neither. He

apparently began to write it down at the same time as *Werther* in 1774, and we find mention of its progress in the two following years ; indeed, all the important parts of the fragment which appeared in 1790 were known to Jacobi before 1776. He took the work with him to Italy, where he added little to it except the scene in the witches' kitchen. The dedication, the "Prologue in Heaven," which presents to the reader the idea of the whole work, the prelude on the stage copied from the Indian drama, the lyrical intermezzo, the scene with Wagner before the city gate, and the scene with Mephistopheles in the study were written before 1800. In that year he was busy with *Helena* for the second part ; and he added nothing afterwards to the first, except the "Walpurgis Night" and the scene of Valentine's death. *Faust* justly stands at the head of all Goethe's works, and it deserves a

very high place among the best works of every age. Founded on a well-known popular tale, indebted for its interest and pathos to incidents of universal experience, it deals with the deepest problems which can engage the mind of man. In this combination of qualities it is perhaps superior to any one of Shakespeare's plays. The plot is as simple and as well known to the audience as the plot of a Greek tragedy. The innocence and fall of Gretchen appeal to every heart; the inward struggles of Faust, like those of Hamlet, and the antagonism of the sensual and moral principles, interest the reader just in proportion as his own mind and nature have been similarly stirred. Each line is made to stand for eternity; not a word is thrown away; the poem has entered as a whole into the mind and thought of modern Germany; nearly every expression has become a house-

hold word. Characters are sketched in a single scene ; Valentine lives for us as clearly as Faust himself. Deeper meanings are opened up at every reading, and the next age will discover much in it which is concealed from this. Goethe, writing of *Faust* in his eightieth year, says with truth, " The commendation which the poem has received far and near may be perhaps owing to this quality, that it permanently preserves the period of development of a human soul which is tormented by all that afflicts mankind, shaken also by all that disturbs it, repelled by all that it finds repellent, and made happy by all that it desires. The author is at present far removed from such conditions ; the world likewise has to some extent other struggles to undergo ; nevertheless the state of man, in joy and sorrow, remains very much the same, and the latest born will still find cause to acquaint himself

with what has been enjoyed and suffered before him in order to adapt himself to that which awaits him."

In 1809 he finished *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (The Elective Affinities), a story which is always cited to prove the immoral tendency of his works. A married couple, Edward and Charlotte, are thrown into constant companionship with two unmarried persons, the Captain and Ottilie. A cross attraction takes place similar to that which is often seen in chemical experiments. Edward unites himself with Ottilie, Charlotte with the Captain. The psychological changes by which this result is produced are portrayed with a masterly hand. The moral may be held by some to exalt the preponderance of fatality in human affairs, and the uselessness of contending against irresistible circumstances. Others may believe that the story is intended to show the disastrous

*Wahlver-
wandt-
schaften.*

calamities which may be wrought by a weak and self-indulgent will. Ottilie, though she cannot resist her passion, has strength enough to starve herself to death ; Edward is the prototype of Arthur Donnithorne and Tito Melema. The work is replete with earnest purpose and terrible warning.

*Farben-
lehre.*

In 1810 Goethe finished the printing of his *Farbenlehre* (Theory of colours), a work which had occupied his mind ever since his journey to Italy. His theories were rejected and disregarded by his contemporaries, but he left them with confidence to the judgment of posterity. Goethe's labours in this domain fall into two natural divisions—one in which he tries to prove that the hypotheses of Newton are unsatisfactory, and another, in which he promulgates a theory of his own. In his first work, published in 1791 and 1792, he describes with great accuracy and liveli-

ness the experiments which he has made. They consist chiefly of the appearances presented by white discs on a black ground, black discs on a white ground, and coloured discs on a black or white ground when seen through a prism. There are two points which he considers fatal to Newton's theory, — that the centre of a broad white surface remains white when seen through a prism, and that even a black streak on a white ground can be entirely decomposed into colours. The scientific friends to whom he communicated these observations assured him that there was nothing in them opposed to Newton's theory,—that they were even confirmations of it. He would not be convinced, and took no pains to acquire that exact knowledge of mathematics and geometrical reasoning without which the more abstruse problems of physical optics could not be intelligible. He went on further to

formulate a theory of his own. His views on the subject are contained in their shortest form in a letter addressed to Jacobi from the camp at Marienburg, in July, 1793. They are divided into six heads, of which the following is an abstract. (1) Light is the simplest matter we have knowledge of, the least capable of analysis, the most homogeneous. It is not a compound body. (2) Least of all is it compounded of coloured lights. Every coloured light is darker than colourless light. Brightness cannot be compounded of darkness. (3) Inflexion, refraction, reflexion, are three conditions under which we often observe apparent colours, but they are rather occasions for their appearance than the cause of it. (4) There are only two pure colours, blue and yellow ; red may be regarded as a property of both of them. There are two mixed colours, green and purple ; the rest are

gradations of these colours, and are not pure. (5) Colourless light cannot be produced out of coloured lights, nor white from coloured pigments. (6) The colours which appear to us arise solely out of a modification of the light. The colours are excited in the light, not developed out of the light. These views he afterwards extended and explained, but very slightly modified. In Goethe's opinion, yellow was light seen through a thickened medium ; blue was darkness seen through an illuminated medium ; all other colours were derived from these two. The theory of the *Farbenlehre* has not yet received the recognition which Goethe anticipated for it. In his own day he had some adherents,—the most distinguished perhaps was the philosopher Hegel, whose views, however, of natural philosophy have caused some inquirers to recoil from his theory of metaphysics. Goethe complained

that no physicist believed in him, and as that is still true in an age which has been devoted more than any other to physical inquiries, we may conclude that the principle upon which his theories are based is radically wrong.

The year 1809, in which *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* was written, was for Goethe the beginning of a new era. He was then fresher and brighter than he had been for ten years before. He had lived through a troubled period of oppressive sorrow. The death of Schiller, the violation of his beloved Weimar, the deaths of the duchess Amalia and of his mother, his own bodily and mental sufferings, had given a tone of sadness to his poetry. As if to put the finishing stroke to the efforts of his life, having married the mother of his children, he arranged and published his collected works, and completed his theory of colours. The unfinished drama of

Pandora is a symbol of this time. The part which is completed refers only to past experiences of sadness; the continuation was to have lifted the curtain of future hope.

It was natural, at the beginning of a new course of life, that Goethe should write an account of his past existence. The study of his collected poems made it apparent to him how necessary it was to furnish a key by which they might be understood. These various causes led to the composition of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Poetry and Truth), an autobiographical history of the poet's life from his birth till his settlement at Weimar. This work is the cause of much embarrassment to the poet's biographers. Where it ought to be the most trustworthy source of information, it is most misleading. It is probable that Goethe intended it to be an accurate and circumstantial account of his

Autobiography.

life. But the inner life of an individual is more clear to him than the outer. The stages of our self-development are better remembered than the exact circumstances which produced them, still less than the order of time in which they followed each other. Goethe took pains to ascertain facts which he had forgotten. But he was so conscious that imagination would play a large part in the composition, that in the title he gave Poetry the precedence before Truth. The indefatigable industry of German investigation has laid open before us every detail of the poet's life and every phase of his feeling. *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, if it has lost its rank as a history, still keeps its place as a classic. The simple loving delineation of the childhood of genius is as fresh as ever, and is of more universal interest from being less particular. The first five books of this autobiography appeared in 1811, the

next five in 1812, the third instalment at Easter, 1814, and the conclusion after Goethe's death.

The period during which this was his principal work witnessed the greatest political event of the first half of our century, the rising of the German people against the power of Napoleon. In this Goethe took no share, and with it he apparently felt little sympathy. He made no impassioned orations to his countrymen, like Fichte; he wrote no inspiring lays like Körner. The ballads which he composed in 1813 are harmless enough, —*Der wandelnde Glocke, Der getreue Eckhart, Der Todtentanz*. He saw Stein and Arndt at Dresden in 1813, but disappointed them by his impassive manner. He said to Körner's father at the same time, "Yes, shake your chains! The man is too great for you. You will not break them, but only drive them deeper into your flesh." The reasons

The war
of liber-
ation.

for this apparent coldness are perhaps more simple than they appear at first sight. Goethe was a man of thought rather than of action. Although a fair portion of his long life was given to the practical business of his adopted country, his heart was always in speculation or artistic production. While inspecting mines he was spinning theories of geological formation ; while working for the War Commission he gladly ran away to the castle of Dornburg to bury himself amongst his deserted papers. The pressure of court business at Weimar drove him to the solitude of Italy. In the defiles of the Argonne, and in the trenches before Mainz, he was scheming and arranging his theory of colours. A bombardment was valued by him less as an attack upon the enemy than as a series of interesting experiments in optics. Added to this natural indifference to the details of human affairs was

his belief in the predominance of force, and in the necessary evolution of the history of the world. Napoleon was to him the greatest living depository of power. Nations, whether conquered or victorious, separated or united, obeyed a common law against which individual will strove in vain. Goethe was thus incapacitated for politics, both by his qualities and his defects. This habit of abstract contemplation grew upon him in later life. Those who condemn him on this ground should remember that he hailed in no grudging spirit the formation of a united Germany, and that his works have been the most potent agency in making all Germans feel that they are one. Few would wish to exchange the self-conflict of *Faust*, or even the wayward wanderings of *Meister*, for the hectic extravagance of Körner or the unsubstantial rhetoric of Schiller's Posa.

It was hardly to be expected that at

the age of sixty-five Goethe should strike out new lines of poetical activity. However, in the *West-östliche Divan*, he made the first attempt to transplant Eastern poetry to a German soil, and set an example which has been followed by Heine and Mirza Schaffy. In 1811 he first became acquainted with the works of Hafiz in Hammer's translation. At a time when North and South and West were splitting in sunder, when thrones were breaking up and empires trembling, he sought a willing refuge in the restoring fountain of the Eastern poet. The book *Timur* has an obvious reference to the expedition of Napoleon in Russia, but the large majority of the poems are amatory, and are addressed to an imaginary Suleika, whose name is given to one of the books. Once more, in his old age, Goethe came under the sovereignty of a woman. She was Marianne von Willemer, the newly married wife of

*West-
östliche
Divan.*

1811

a Frankfort banker, Jacob von Willemer, who was an old friend of Goethe's and of his brother-in-law Schlosser. Goethe made her acquaintance in a journey which he took in the Rhine country with Sulpiz Boiserée, who had succeeded in interesting Goethe in early German Art, a subject to which he was himself devoted. The correspondence between Goethe and Marianne was published in 1877. It extends almost to the day of his death, and includes letters from Eckermann giving an account of his last moments. Not only were most of the *Divan* poems addressed to Suleika, but several of those included in the collection are by Marianne herself, and will bear comparison with those of Goethe. In these poems the Oriental form is not very strictly observed. The fondness of the Orientals for the repetition of single rhymes is not attended to, and if sometimes remembered is soon forgotten.

Their Eastern colour depends rather on the suggestion of Eastern scenery and the introduction of Eastern names. This, however, gives the poet a greater licence to levity, to fatalism, and to passion, than would have been possible in poems of a purely German character.

The
closing
years.

The last twelve years of Goethe's life, when he had passed his seventieth birthday, were occupied by his criticisms on the literature of foreign countries, by the *Wanderjahre*, and the second part of *Faust*. He was the literary dictator of Germany and of Europe. He took but little interest in the direction in which the younger German school was moving, and was driven to turn his eyes abroad. He conceived an intense admiration for Byron, which was increased by his early death. Byron appears as Euphorion in the second part of *Faust*. Goethe also recognised the greatness of Scott, and was one of the first to send a greeting to

the Italian Manzoni. He conceived the idea of a world-literature transcending the narrow limits of race and country, which should unite all nations in harmony of feeling and aspiration. German writers claim that his design has been realized, and the literature of every age and country can be studied in a tongue which Goethe had made rich, flexible, and serviceable for the purpose. The *Wanderjahre*, although it contains some of Goethe's most beautiful conceptions, *Meister's Wanderjahre.* The Flight into Egypt, The Description of the Pedagogic Province, The Parable of the Three Reverences, is yet an ill-assorted collection of all kinds of writings, old and new. Its author never succeeded in giving it form or coherency, and his later style, beautiful as it is, becomes in these years vague and abstract. Still, without this work we should not be acquainted with the full richness and power of Goethe's mind.

Second
part of
Faust.

The second part of *Faust* has been a battlefield of controversy since its publication, and demands fuller attention. Its fate may be compared with that of the latest works of Beethoven. For a long time it was regarded as impossible to understand, and as not worth understanding, the production of a great artist whose faculties had been impaired by age. By degrees it has, by careful labour, become intelligible to us, and the conviction is growing that it is the deepest and most important work of the author's life. Its composition cannot be called an after-thought. There is no doubt that the poet finished at the age of eighty the plan which he had conceived sixty years before. The work in its entirety may be described as the first part of *Faust* "writ large." This is a picture of the macrocosm of society as the earlier play was of the microcosm of the individual. The parallelism between the

two dramas is not perfect, but it reveals itself more and more clearly to a patient study. The first act, with its varied scenes of country, castle, garden, galleries, and halls, answers to the two prologues of the first part; the second act introduces us again to Faust's study and his familiar Wagner. The classical Walpurgis Night has its prototype in the first part. The third act is devoted to Helena, who is the heroine of the second part as Gretchen is of the first. The marriage of Faust and Helena typifies the union of the classical and romantic schools, and their child is Euphorion, who is symbolical of Byron. In the fourth act Faust is raised instead of being degraded by his union with Helena. He wishes for a sphere of beneficent activity, and obtains it by war. The fifth act is devoted to the complete regeneration of the soul of Faust. Even the sight of all that he

has accomplished does not satisfy him. It is not until he is blind to outward objects that one moment of divine rapture reveals to him the continuance of his work in coming generations, and convinces him that he has not lived in vain. In this one moment of supreme happiness he dies. The struggle for the possession of Faust's soul, indicated in the first part, is fully elaborated in the second. Mephistopheles is shown to have worked out the good in spite of himself, and Margaret appears transfigured as the revelation to man of the divine love.

With the completion of *Faust* Goethe felt that the work of his life was accomplished. He still continued to work with regularity. He ordered and arranged his writings, he laboured at his *Tages- und Jahresheften*, an autobiographical journal of his life. He bated not one jot of heart or hope,

and took the liveliest interest in every movement of literature and science. When the news of the July Revolution of 1830 reached Weimar, Goethe was excited beyond his wont, not on account of the triumph of liberal principles, but because the controversy between Cuvier and Geoffroy St. Hilaire had been decided in favour of the latter. Still he had much to darken his latter days. His old friends were falling fast around him. His wife had died in 1816, after a union of thirty years. He felt her loss bitterly. The duchess Amalia had died eight years before, not long after the death of his own mother. He now had to undergo sadder experiences when he was less able to bear them. Frau von Stein, with whom he had renewed his friendship if not his love, died in January, 1827; and in June, 1828, he lost the companion of his youth, the grand-duke Karl August, who died suddenly,

away from Weimar, on his return from a journey. Goethe received the news with outward calmness, but said forebodingly, "Now it is all over," and went to mourn and labour at the castle of Dornburg, where everything reminded him of the days of their early friendship. The duchess Louise survived her husband till February, 1830. When Goethe died in 1832 none of the old Weimar set were left except Knebel, who lived two years longer. A greater blow than these was the death of his only son, whom, in spite of his moral weakness, his father deeply loved. He died at Rome, in October, 1830, and is buried close by the pyramid of Caius Cestius, where Goethe himself once desired to be laid. We have a full account of the last nine years of Goethe's life from the writings of Eckermann, who became his secretary in 1823, lived with him till his death, and has noted down his conversations

and his habits with the minuteness and fidelity of a Boswell.

We must pass on to the closing scene. On Thursday, March 15, 1832, he spent his last cheerful and happy day. He was visited by the grand-duchess and other friends. He awoke the next morning with a chill. From this he gradually recovered, and on Monday was so much better that he designed to begin his regular work on the next day. But in the middle of the night he woke up with a deathly coldness, which extended from his hands over his body, and which it took many hours to subdue. It then appeared that the lungs were attacked, and that there was no hope of his recovery. Goethe did not anticipate death. He sat fully clothed in his arm-chair in his tiny bedroom, made attempts to reach his study, spoke confidently of his recovery, and of the walks he would take in the fine April

His death.

days. His daughter-in-law Ottilie tended him faithfully. On the morning of the 22nd his strength gradually left him. He sat slumbering in his arm-chair, holding Ottilie's hand. Her name was constantly on his lips. His mind occasionally wandered, at one time to his beloved Schiller, at another to a fair female head with black curls, some passion of his youth. His last words were an order to his servant to open the second shutter to let in more light. After this he traced with his forefinger letters in the air. At half-past eleven in the day he drew himself, without any sign of pain, into the left corner of his arm-chair, and went so peacefully to sleep that it was long before the watchers knew that his spirit was really gone. He is buried in the grand-ducal vault, where the bones of Schiller are also laid.

Goethe differs from all other great writers, except perhaps Milton, in this

respect, that his works cannot be understood without a knowledge of his life, and that his life is in itself a work of art, greater than any work which it created. This renders a long and circumstantial biography a necessity to all who would study the poet seriously. At the same time he is so great that we are even now scarcely sufficiently removed from him to be able to form a correct judgment of his place in literary history. He is not only the greatest poet of Germany; he is one of the greatest poets of all ages. Posterity must decide his exact precedence in that small and chosen company which contains the names of Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare. He was the apostle of self-culture. Always striving after objective truth, and sometimes attaining to it, he exhibited to the world every phase of his plastic mind in turn, and taught both by precept and example the husbandry

of the soul. The charge of selfishness, so often brought against him, cannot be maintained. His nature responded to every influence of passing emotion. Like a delicate harp, it was silent if not touched, and yet gave its music to every wooing of the wilful wind. The charge of unsympathetic coldness roused the deep indignation of those who knew him best. He learned by sad experience that the lesson of life is to renounce. Rather than cavil at his statuesque repose, we should learn to admire the self-conflict and self-command which moulded the exuberance of his impulsive nature into monumental symmetry and proportion. His autobiography has done him wrong. It is the story, not of his life, but of his recollections. He needs no defence, nothing but sympathetic study. As Homer concentrated in himself the spirit of Antiquity, Dante of the Middle Ages, and Shakespeare

of the Renaissance, so Goethe is the representative of the modern spirit, the prophet of mankind under new circumstances and new conditions, the appointed teacher of ages yet unborn.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

A COMPLETE bibliography of Goethe literature would fill a good-sized book, but it may be useful to indicate some of the principal sources of information about the poet without any attempt at an exhaustive statement. The most important authority for his life is his own work. The *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, the *Italienische Reise*, especially in its original form of letters to Frau von Stein, the *Reise am Rhein*, and the *Tages- und Jahresheften*, have an especial autobiographical value. German research has fixed the date and occasion of nearly all Goethe's poems, and there are few of them which do not help to illustrate his life. Of late years a complete catalogue of all Goethe's extant letters has been published, and a chronological record of all his reported conversations. The treasures of the Goethe *Haus* at Weimar have revealed much with regard to the poet, and will reveal more. With the help of diaries, sketches for finished works, the correspondence of friends, and other materials, we may be able to examine with correctness the whole working life of Goethe as it passed day by

day. The spirit of order and punctuality which he inherited from his father is seen in the arrangement of his papers ; even his visiting cards were carefully preserved in chronological order. For the first period of Goethe's life *Der Junge Goethe*, in three volumes, published by Hirzel, with an introduction by Michael Bernays, is indispensable. It contains his letters and poems in chronological order. Among the letters of Goethe which have been published up to the last few years, are those to Schiller, Klopstock, Lavater, Zelter, Bettina von Arnim, Schulz, Countess Stolberg, Schlegel, Frau von Stein and her son Fritz von Stein, Jacob, his Leipzig friends, Reinhard, Knebel, Grüner, Herder, the Duke Karl August, F. A. Wolf, Johanna Fallmer, Marianne von Willemer, K. Göttling and Carlyle.

The first life of Goethe was published by Döring in 1828, of which a second enlarged edition appeared after the poet's death in 1833. Then followed the life by Viehoff, in four volumes, 1847-1853. A very excellent life is that of Schäfer, which appeared first in 1851, the third edition of which dates from 1871. It is contained in two volumes of moderate size, and is written with scarcely a superfluous word. The life by Düntzer (1880) is a most laborious and conscientious work : it narrates with precision every event of Goethe's life, but

is rather deficient in criticism. It has been translated into English by T. W. Lyster, 1883. We should also mention *Goethe, sein Leben und seine Werke*, by the Jesuit, Alexander Baumgartner, the second edition of which was published in 1885. It is a severe, and a somewhat unfair, criticism of Goethe's life and works from the Catholic point of view. But it is well written, with full knowledge, and is worth reading as showing everything that may be urged against the character and genius of the poet. The account of Goethe and Schiller by Karl Goedeke in his *Grundriss der deutschen Dichtung*, is admirable, and so is the little book *Goethe's Leben und Schriften*, published by him in 1874. The life of Goethe has been popularized in England by G. H. Lewes in a work which has been as much read in the German translation as in the original. It is admirably written ; but while it deals adequately with the main facts of Goethe's life, and his principal works, it leaves many things untouched which a biographer ought to notice. The knowledge of Goethe's works in England is due as much as anything else to the writings of Thomas Carlyle. Among the editions of Goethe's works the most complete is that of Hempel, of which a new edition is in course of publication. The Commentaries of Düntzer are also worthy of our praise ; they have

left no side of Goethe's activity and no period of his life unexplored. The new edition of Goethe's works, published under the auspices of the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, in which all the treasures of the Goethe archives at Weimar will be printed, will supersede all others and form a fresh basis for criticism. We must not pass over the brilliant lectures on Goethe by Hermann Grimm, and the information given in the *Jahrbücher* of the German Goethe Society.

Translations of most of Goethe's works have been published in Bohn's Standard Library. The best translations of *Faust* into English are those of A. Hayward, John Anster, Theodore Martin, and Bayard Taylor. A translation of *Götz von Berlichingen*, by Sir Walter Scott, was published in 1799. Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* is admirable in style and correctness.

A chronological list of the works of Goethe, published in his lifetime, is subjoined.

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|----------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| <i>Von deutscher Bankunst</i> | 1773 | <i>Erwin und Elmire</i> | 1775 |
| <i>Götz von Berlichingen</i> | 1773 | <i>Stella</i> | 1776 |
| <i>Die Leiden des jungen Werthers</i> | 1774 | <i>Claudine von Villa Bella</i> | 1776 |
| <i>Götter, Helden und Wieland</i> | 1774 | <i>Die Fischerinn</i> | 1782 |
| <i>Neueröffnetes moralisches politisches Puppenspiel</i> | 1774 | <i>Rede bei der Eröffnung des neuen Bergbaus zu Weimar</i> | 1784 |
| | | <i>Die Vögel</i> | 1787 |

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|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---------|
| <i>Der Triumph der</i> | | <i>Winckelmann und sein</i> | |
| <i>Empfindsamkeit</i> | 1781 | <i>Jahrhundert</i> | 1805 |
| <i>Die Mitschuldigen</i> | 1787 | <i>Faust (Theil I.)</i> | 1808 |
| <i>Iphigenie auf Tauris</i> | 1787 | <i>Die Wahlverwand-</i> | |
| <i>Die Geschwister</i> | 1787 | <i>schaften</i> | 1809 |
| <i>Egmont</i> | 1788 | <i>Pandora</i> | 1810 |
| <i>Faust—ein Fragment</i> | 1790 | <i>Aus meinem Leben:</i> | |
| <i>Torquato Tasso</i> | 1790 | <i>Wahrheit und Dich-</i> | |
| <i>Scherz, List und Rache</i> | 1790 | <i>tung</i> | 1811-12 |
| <i>Versuch die Metamor-</i> | | <i>Philip Herbert: Bio-</i> | |
| <i>phose der Pflanzen</i> | | <i>graphische Skizze</i> | 1811 |
| <i>zu erklären</i> | 1790 | <i>Gedichte</i> | 1812 |
| <i>Feri und Bäteli</i> | 1790 | <i>Willkommen</i> | 1814 |
| <i>Beiträge zur Optik</i> | 1791-2 | <i>Des Epimenides Er-</i> | |
| <i>Der Gross-Cophita</i> | 1792 | <i>wachen</i> | 1815 |
| <i>Der Bürgergeneral</i> | 1793 | <i>Italienische Reise</i> | 1816-17 |
| <i>Reineke Fuchs</i> | 1794 | <i>Ueber Kunst und Alter-</i> | |
| <i>Wilhelm Meister's Lehr-</i> | | <i>thum</i> | 1816-32 |
| <i>jahre</i> | 1795-6 | <i>Zur Natur - Wissen-</i> | |
| <i>Benvenuto Cellini</i> | 1798 | <i>schaft überhaupt,</i> | |
| <i>Hermann und Doro-</i> | | <i>besonders zur Mor-</i> | |
| <i>thea</i> | 1798 | <i>phologie</i> | 1817-23 |
| <i>Neueste Gedichte</i> | 1800 | <i>West-Ostlichen Divan</i> | 1819 |
| <i>Was wir bringen</i> | 1802 | <i>Wilhelm Meister's Wan-</i> | |
| <i>Tancred</i> | 1802 | <i>derjahre (Theil I.)</i> | 1821 |
| <i>Mahomet</i> | 1802 | <i>Die Campagne in</i> | |
| <i>Die natürliche Tochter</i> | 1804 | <i>Frankreich</i> | 1822 |
| <i>Taschenbuch auf das</i> | | <i>Wilhelm Meister's Wan-</i> | |
| <i>Jahr</i> | 1804 | <i>derjahre (Theil II.)</i> | 1830 |
| <i>Rameau's Neffe</i> | 1805 | <i>Faust (Theil II.)</i> | 1833 |



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